

Iran-contra
déjà vu
in Congress

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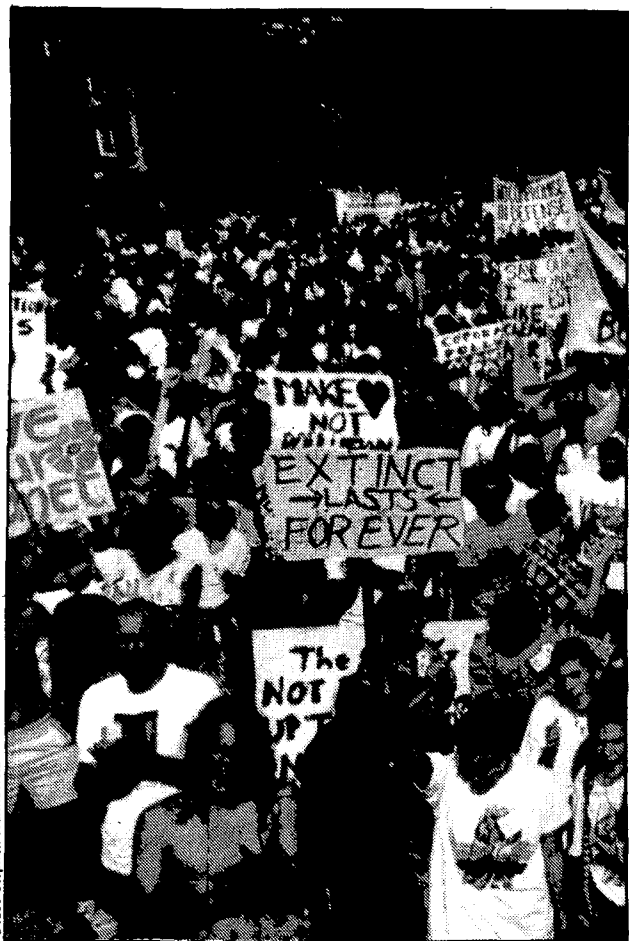
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Mayor Wilson Goode

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Making history at the University of Illinois.

To be young, green and out of apathy

By Gregory L. Walker

CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, IL

Inspired by '60s activists, enflamed by years of Reaganomic destruction and heartened by the power of unified action to tear down walls and rebuild nations, thousands of students converged on the University of Illinois earlier this month for Catalyst, the largest gathering of student environmentalists in history.

Students from across the country and around the world crammed local hotels, camped out on college lawns and crashed at the homes of locals. They played music, picnicked and networked, exchanging stories of protest and struggle. Tie-dye, sandals, bluejeans and ponytails prevailed, as did the spiritual buzz of concentrated youthful energy. "We're out of apathy!" was declared, and hour by hour the conference gained historical and political significance.

Two weeks before the conference, only 30 students

were registered, hampering organizers' hopes for an attendance of 3,000. But when the opening speaker took the stage on October 5, 7,100 voices were cheering. Film star Robert Redford, consumer advocate Ralph Nader, Rev. Jesse Jackson, Physicians for Social Responsibility founder Helen Caldicott and United Farm Workers President Cesar Chavez did not make the standard cameo appearances. Instead, they each made lengthy, impassioned and inclusive pleas for change, pledging their support to this brewing student movement.

The three-day conference prompted discussion of renewed activism on campuses nationwide. "It surpassed expectation ... to the level of my wildest dreams," said U of I student and conference co-chair Jeremy Hays. "There are 14 million college students [in the U.S.], and we must mobilize our political and economic clout and our vision."

SEACing change: Catalyst was the latest victory for the Student Environmental Action Coalition (SEAC, pronounced "seek"), which itself began with humble designs. In 1988, two students from the University of North Carolina put an ad in *Greenpeace* magazine seeking others interested in forming an international environmental coalition. Two hundred responded, and SEAC was born. In two years, SEAC has organized marches in 35 states, held two Clean Air Act rallies in Washington D.C., and sponsored Threshold—last year's conference that drew 1,700 students to Chapel Hill, N.C.

"I want everyone who hears about this conference to realize that we brought leaders [together] who represent more than the people who are here," said University of Chicago graduate and SEAC national media coordinator Helen Denham. There are students from 11 countries who represent 17,000 in Canada, 20,000 in Europe and more than 25,000 in China, she added, "and it's going to make a difference."

SEAC plans to make its movement an effective one. A Corporate Accountability Campaign has been designed to investigate and expose the activities of multinational companies, keeping their growing power in check and holding them responsible for the environmental degradation they cause. The campaign, which is currently focusing on the oil industry, was kicked off the day after the conference when 150 students rallied at the Amoco headquarters in Chicago.

Perhaps Catalyst's greatest success was the realization that the concept of "the environment" itself must be expanded. After conferring with students at the conference, organizer Denham said that SEAC found that many campus "environmentalists" consider the environment not in terms of preserving a distant land or an endangered species but in terms of preserving the quality of life within their own communities. With that in mind, SEAC—which now has more than 1,000 chapters—plans to transform "environmentalism" into a social movement for the environment.

They're no flower children: Unlike the youth movements that surfaced in the '60s, when the generation gap caused rifts that often cut the young off from valuable wisdom, SEAC relies on the advice of seasoned rebels such as former U of I professor Lou Gold, an environmentalist who in the early '70s organized strong opposition to the Vietnam War; John O'Connor, director of the National Toxics Campaign; and Ruth Hunter, director of ECO-Media, a national organization of media advisers.

"Students and youth cannot isolate themselves and rebel against leaders who are already working on this," said Denham. "We invited some of the top leaders to talk to us, to get their advice, to use their experience to guide us."

Ralph Nader, who walked on stage at the conference with his trademark stack of books and level pragmatism, supplied students with some down-to-earth advice. He dispensed with pep talk and spoke of self-knowledge as the key to mental survival as a concerned citizen and career activist. "Some of the greatest leaders in the '60s burned out because they did not have their personal house in order," Nader said.

But he garnered his loudest response when he cited the victories of the peace movement—on the ropes in the early days of Reaganism. By 1990, Nader said, worldwide peace was on the rise. "Just at the time you think you are about to lose may be the time when you are about to break through," he concluded.

Jesse Jackson delivered a rousing speech that included

pleas for building coalitions with African-Americans and Native Americans and for harvesting more political might. He called for support in his bid for Washington, D.C., senator, adding that such a post would better enable him speak out for environmental causes. "Environmental protection will require environmental power," Jackson said. "In Washington, every day the loggers and the monied interests are represented. It's time we had some representation."

An unapathetic agenda: Rallies, speeches and a parade at the conference revealed energy and enthusiasm that SEAC organizers hope to spread. Even a benefit concert—which featured reggae duo Casslebury-Dupree, the BoDeans and British folk singer Billy Bragg—was charged with calls for political change and environmental awareness. Bragg, a self-proclaimed socialist, was by far the most outspoken of the performers, and said movements like SEAC and events like Catalyst were long overdue.

INSIDE STORY

"It's about time American students got off their arses and did something," he said. "Students are supposed to be radical."

Another conference triumph was the willingness of students to admit to one anxiety apparent throughout the event—domination of the environmental movement by the white middle class. "It didn't seem like they [organizers] were reaching out for people of color," said U of I student Thomasine Gunn. "Where are the minority people on the planning committee? If they really want to help people with this conference, they need to think about poverty, education, feeding everybody and finding homes for everybody."

Although a severe lack of minority participation was exhibited at Catalyst, Hays says SEAC is attempting to overcome the problem by urging students to build multiracial coalitions and meet with campus minority organizations.

Catalyst was conceived on the idea that change necessitates student action. Numerous workshops were given on community organizing, corporate divestment, newsletter publication and lobbying. SEAC organizers say the real success of the conference will be measured by the implementation of these tactics on campuses and in communities nationwide.

"We hope now that everybody gets back to their campus and really does something," said Hays.

Though details are still being worked out in the wake of input from Catalyst participants, SEAC is considering involvement with social issues that don't immediately affect the environment but eventually will have the most impact, such as increasing voter registration and college funding. For now, the Catalyst spirit is being carried over into expanding the Corporate Accountability Campaign, which features the following stages.

- By getting colleges to conserve energy and produce less waste, SEAC hopes to turn campuses into national environmental models. Environmental Audits will be performed to determine whether or not colleges are in line with SEAC proposals.

- SEAC hopes to get its local chapters to ally themselves with community groups and organizations in surrounding areas to halt corporate exploitation. Last year, SEAC members at the U of I at Chicago joined with community organizers to stop the college from building an incinerator near Hyde Park, a neighborhood in the university area.

- Coordinated national action to fight huge conglomerates is also on the SEAC agenda. Students plan to organize simultaneous single-issue marches to capture widespread media attention.

Despite Catalyst's impressive success, this question remains: does it signal a real trend toward widespread student activity?

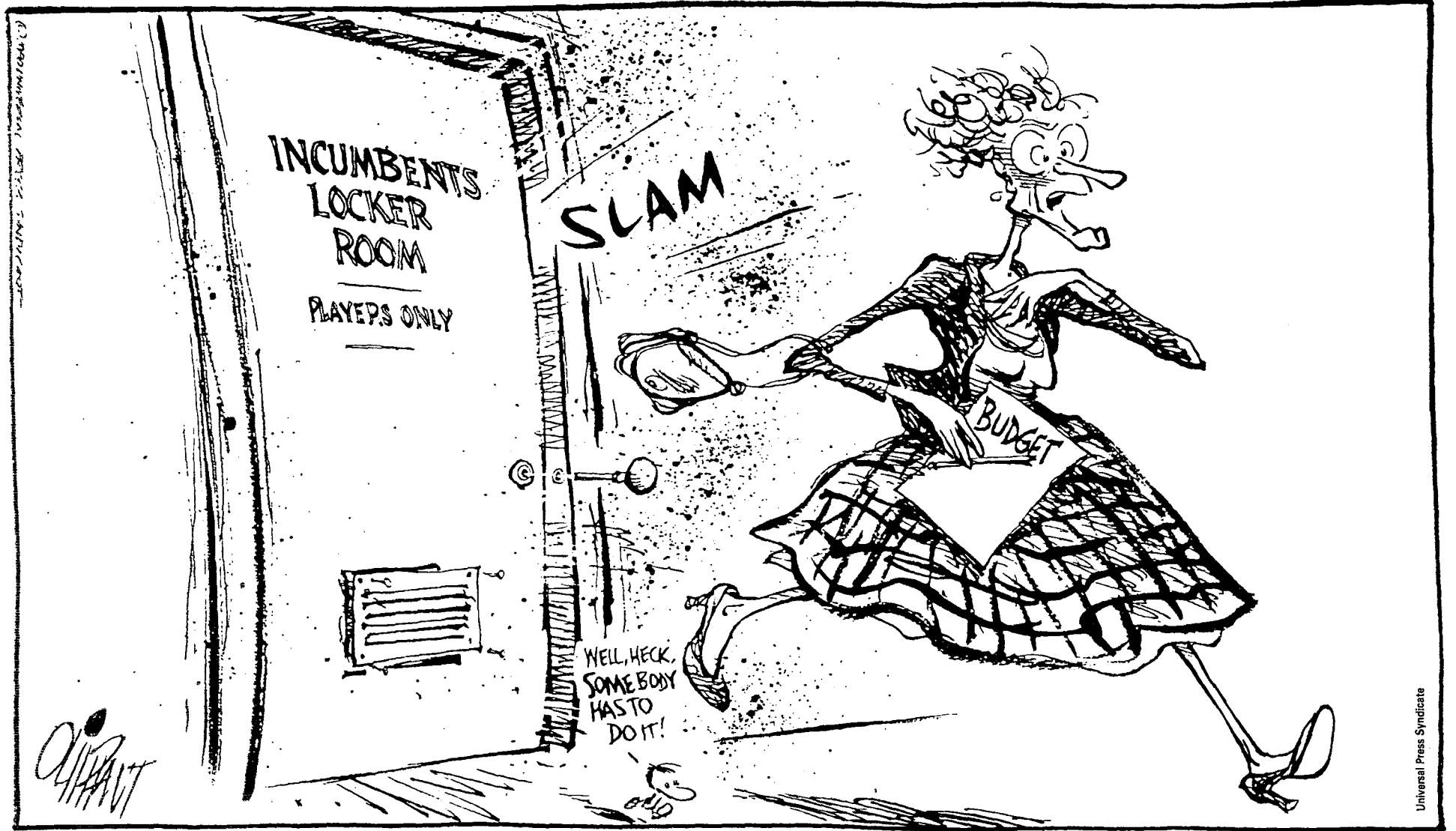
SEAC organizers think so. "You never know what'll happen when students get together," said Hays. □

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'WHY, THOSE RUDE THINGS! I JUST HATE THIS PART OF MY JOB!'

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

POLITICAL SUICIDE" AND "PURE POLITICAL poison" were two of the terms that greeted the budget that the White House and congressional leaders unveiled October 1 after five months of summit meetings.

These postmortems appeared to be confirmed when the House threw out the summit budget on October 5. But barely three days later, Congress passed—and the president signed—the outlines of a budget almost identical to the one that the House had killed 254 to 179. If the budget had been such poison, why did Congress choose to swallow it?

The answer is that Congress didn't really pass a budget. Instead, it passed a resolution that, in the words of the Democratic Study Group's analysis, "simply sets targets and guidelines for further budgetary action." The resolution includes overall levels of spending and revenues, spending levels for broad functional areas such as "defense" and "transportation," but not specific levels for particular programs and agencies. These are to be filled out by House and Senate committees and then approved by Congress and sent to Bush by October 19.

Like the first budget, this one would produce \$40 billion in savings next year and \$500 billion over the next five years by cutting spending and raising taxes. But the Democratic authors of the new plan promised that in specifying cuts and taxes, the Democratic-controlled House and Senate committees would rid the budget bill of the more unpopular features of the summit document.

This may, however, prove wishful thinking. Democrats have not demonstrated that they are any more adroit than Republicans at re-

The more things change, the more they stay the same

sisting the entreaties of special interests—from Chicago commodity brokers to Texas oil wildcatters. And in some of its features, the new congressional budget is already a step back from the one adopted at the summit.

Military increases: Congress' resolution vests the power to write the budget in the hands of key committee chairs, particularly Sen. Lloyd Bentsen (D-TX) of the Senate Finance Committee and Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D-IL) of the House Ways and Means Committee. The two have already promised to eliminate a controversial provision that allowed taxpayers to deduct 25 percent from the cost of purchasing stocks in small business—a provision that would have revived the tax-shelter industry. Bentsen also plans to reduce the cuts in Medicare funding.

By ceding control of the tax and spending issue to Bentsen and Rostenkowski, Congress is also opening the door to pressure from lobbyists. Unlike the summit negotiations, which were held in secret, they will operate under the watchful eye of corporate tax lobbyists and representatives of the truckers, airlines and tobacco companies. The heavy tread of the American Trucking Association can already be seen in Bentsen's agreeing to reduce the proposed tax on gasoline from 10 cents to nine cents.

On one very controversial item, the congressional resolution may even be worse than the summit proposal. From fiscal year 1991 through fiscal year 1993, Congress proposes to raise defense outlays by \$884 billion, compared to \$882 billion in the summit

document. Its outlay for next year is \$600 million less, but on October 9, the House Appropriations panel added \$5.3 billion to that total, meaning that it has become considerably higher than the summit total. Congress will now have to make even greater cuts in non-defense programs.

Moreover, Congress' new proposals for military spending are somewhat higher than the amounts authorized by the House September 19 and dramatically higher than the proposals put forward by mainstream policy experts. Congressional outlays for the next three years would be \$24 billion more than the original House proposal and \$56 billion more than those suggested by a Defense Budget Task Force, chaired by Lawrence Korb, assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration. And the new proposals don't even include funding for the Persian Gulf crisis.

Several House members, including Rep. Ron Dellums (D-CA), initially complained bitterly about the size of the defense allocations in the summit proposal but went along with the new congressional budget. Rep. James Traficant (D-OH) was one of the few who spoke out against it. Explaining why he opposed the resolution, the colorful Youngstown congressman said, "The only cuts [in the defense budget] were some general getting a vasectomy."

Tax stalemate: To make matters worse, on the big issue of income-tax increases and cuts, Bush and the Democrats remain deadlocked. On October 9, Bentsen tried to revive

the deal that Democrats had offered Bush during summit negotiations. Democrats would get to remove the "bubble" that allows taxpayers with incomes over \$180,000 to be taxed at 28 percent, while those with incomes from \$75,000 to \$180,000 are taxed at 33 percent. In Bentsen's proposal, the marginal tax rates for all incomes above \$75,000 would be 33 percent.

But Bentsen would also grant Bush and

Continued on page 10

Japan strikes again

Over the last two decades, Japan's lobbyists in Washington have shown an uncanny ability to know what is going on in delicate and highly secret trade or budget talks. As Pat Choate reports in his new book, *Agents of Influence*, the Japanese knew that Carla Hills was going to be appointed the U.S. special trade representative before the American press and Congress did. During the budget talks between the White House and congressional leaders, the Japanese once again demonstrated their expertise in information gathering.

The talks themselves were secret and few details were released to the press, but shortly after the budget negotiators had proposed taxing luxury electronic goods, the Japanese had secured a copy of the plan and developed an effective strategy for killing the proposal. According to a later *Washington Post* story, the Japanese got the managers of electronic equipment plants to bring pressure on the congressional representatives. The proposal was subsequently dropped from the tax package.

—J.B.J.

By Joel Bleifuss

Our oiled web we weave

As the threat of a Gulf war rages—conveniently keeping other news off the national agenda—"our way of life" in the U.S. goes on. Not that the nation is unconcerned with the fate of "our" oil. Wisconsin's *Eau Claire Leader-Telegram* newspaper asked 14-year-old Katy Gutowski, "Should the U.S. keep troops in Saudi Arabia?" She answered, "I think we should just blow their heads away ... because we have to have oil." What is this girl's problem? Too many Saturday morning cartoons? Too many issues of the *New Republic*?

The war at home: On August 2—the very day Iraq invaded Kuwait—the U.S. landed in Garberville, Calif. Rep. Douglas Bosco (D-CA) described the operation as follows: "While most Americans enjoyed their summer barbecues, a tiny town in the California redwoods was attacked by the U.S. Army. Five Black Hawk Helicopters, one Huey, two C-130s, 150 National Guardsmen, 50 GIs from Fort Ord and 50 Bureau of Land Management agents have launched a full-scale assault by land and air to rid the area of marijuana plants. Yesterday a quiet little convent called to tell me that they had been invaded. Some at first thought it was the Russians, and then they were surprised to find out it was the Americans. Little old ladies out watering their tomato plants in the morning were shocked to see camouflaged GIs crouching around in the bushes. So far I am told drug czar Bill Bennett and his troops have confiscated 330 marijuana plants."

Behind every Bush: Of course it is easier to go after pastoral pot growers than the men who are making megabucks in the drug business. *Money Laundering Alert* reported in its August issue that 14 of the nation's 37 Federal Reserve Districts had cash surpluses on hand—a situation that should send a signal to federal regulators. "Cash surplus figures compiled by the Fed are considered a reliable, though not a foolproof, measure of money-laundering patterns," according to the newsletter. "One common factor found in 11 of the 14 cities [whose Federal Reserve Districts reported cash surpluses] is their proximity to a coast or border of the U.S. where some of the nation's principal drug-trafficking centers are located." The top four cities on the list are Miami, with a \$2.8 billion surplus; Los Angeles, with \$2.2 billion; Jacksonville, Fla., with \$1.9 billion; and San Antonio, Texas, with \$1.2 billion.

Pick a crime: Ranking seventh on the list is the Federal Reserve District bank in Philadelphia, which brings to mind the following piece of little-reported news. On August 16, on the bottom of page 12 of the *New York Times*, below an explanation of the newly discovered health risks of margarine, was a two-inch Associated Press story filed from Scranton, Pa.: "Two former state prosecutors pleaded guilty to cocaine charges in federal court today. One of them, Michael Trant, a former associate deputy attorney general, pleaded guilty to one count of cocaine possession, and the other, Richard Guida, who headed the state attorney general's criminal division until 1986, admitted one count of cocaine distribution. Mr. Guida is a longtime associate of Henry G. Barr, a former top aide to U.S. Attorney General Dick Thornburgh; Barr was indicted on drug charges by a federal grand jury in Harrisburg last week."

Candidly covert: The week Barr was indicted, President Bush sent U.S. troops to the Gulf and Thornburgh was "candid" about the S&L crisis. During an August 7 press luncheon, Thornburgh hailed the administration's decision to "put more resources and a new U.S. attorney" in President Bush's hometown of Houston, one of the epicenters of the S&L collapse. Not one official from any of Houston's failed S&Ls has been convicted of an S&L crime. (Nationally 165 people have been convicted of S&L fraud since October 1988.) Critics charge Houston's former U.S. attorney, Henry Oncken, with failing to pursue S&L fraud and filling the Houston federal courts with small drug cases. Others allude to something more sinister. During his August meeting with the press, Thornburgh was asked about allegations that some of the money laundered out of failed S&Ls was channeled by the CIA to the Nicaraguan contras and other U.S. proxies. He responded that he was "not aware" of any such links. "All I can say is nothing has come to my attention," he replied. "If there is anything out there, we'd be interested in it." But the *Houston Post's* Kathy Kiely, who attended the press luncheon, reported that last February, when Thornburgh appeared on CNN's Evans and Novak talk show, he was asked about the investigative series by the *Houston Post's* Pete Brewton linking failed S&Ls to CIA operatives. (See "The First Stone" Feb. 21, Feb. 28, March 14, April 25, June 6, June 20 and July 18.) At that time Thornburgh said he had heard about the *Post* series and would have the Justice Department investigate.

ANDERSON

**Heiner Müller: history's scribe**

By Paul Hockenos

The striptease of humanism lays bare the bloody roots of culture.
—Heiner Müller

It's been a rough year for intellectuals in the now-defunct German Democratic Republic (GDR). However curbed under the dictatorship, culture functioned as one of the only mediums for social critique and protest. During a few fleeting days last autumn, the East Germans and their artists appeared united on the streets of Leipzig and East Berlin. But the hopes of the country's intelligentsia were soon dashed. The outpouring of resentment against society's cultured elite shocked the painters and authors, directors and poets. They retreated back to their desks, ideals shattered.

Even for arch-skeptic Heiner Müller—known as a latter-day Beckett for his grim, apocalyptic plays—the depth of embitterment proved a rude awakening. A notorious outsider, the playwright stayed on the sidelines while intellectuals such as novelist Christa Wolf and painter Bärbel Bohley petitioned their visions of a new society. And when East Germany's most celebrated living dramatist-director since Bertolt Brecht made his appearance in November on the revolution's stage, he fared no better than the rest. Before he had stumbled through a speech prepared for him by the Initiative for Independent Trade Unions for a rally, the crowd jeered the short, stocky, bespectacled figure from the podium.

Müller's reticent political debut was as out of character as it was ill-timed. Although loose and congenial in the confines of his East Berlin flat, the 61-year-old writer is uneasy with the crowds of critics and fans that now swamp him in theater lobbies. Throughout his more than three decades of plays, poems and essays, the tragedy of cultural elitism and revolutionary utopias have been dominant themes. In press interviews, the caustic Müller has come down hard on the naivete of the Wolfs and Bohleys.

"One aspect of the state policy here was to drive a wedge of privilege between the intellectuals and the population," he explains in his raspy voice. "You may travel, the others may not. The division was clear, and it worked very effectively. At least in this century," his angular jaw twitches as he speaks, "the privileged cannot speak for the underprivileged." Last fall, a people who had been silenced for 40 years finally had the chance to speak for themselves. As usual, he argues, intellectuals

tried to formulate goals too early in the people's name. Frantz Fanon, says Müller, adding another figure to the cast, from Sophocles to Derrida, that peppers his dialogue, pointed out during the African liberation movement that intellectuals are the revolution's greatest foes. "They always want to build something, when first the masses must tear it down."

Modern tragedy: On the 14th floor of a drab cement apartment block, the author's flat looks little like an abode of privilege. Toppled stacks of books and aging newspapers lie scattered across the yellow-brown linoleum. Above the smog-enveloped city hub, the clamor and exhaust from the noon-time traffic seem to have permeated the discolored walls. Müller grins. He lights another eight-inch cigar and exhales through enlarged nostrils, surrounding his head in a cloud of smoke. An open bottle of scotch sits on the kitchen table. He finds us some clean glasses.

Dressed in his standard attire of black T-shirt, jeans and polyester sport jacket, he reflects on his own complex relationship to the GDR. As the son of a textile worker imprisoned in 1933 for his work with the Social Democrats, the young Müller first saw the socialist state through the eyes of his anti-fascist upbringing. "I was raised in one dictatorship, and then came the anti-dictatorship," he says. "It was a liberation from 'the other,' but I couldn't identify with the new system either."

The tragedy of modern socialism, he says, is the separation of knowledge and power. Antonio Gramsci warned of this trend in a letter to Lenin in 1921. "For the first time in history," Gramsci wrote, "the rulers stand under the [intellectual] level of the ruled. If this discrepancy is not addressed, the experiment will be ruined." "That is exactly what happened," says Müller. "Everything that has transpired in Eastern Europe is a tragedy of stupidity and ignorance."

After a short stint as a journalist for the weekly *Sonntag* and the journal *New German Literature* in the early '50s, Müller began his creative work in earnest. The 27-year-old writer's first plays reflect his own internal struggle over the goals of the new state and their totalitarian manifestation. As his tone became more abrasive, his work was banned for its "perspectiveless defeatism." In 1961, he was expelled from the Writers Union. Four years later, his wife and co-worker, the poet Inge Müller, committed suicide.

Even during the hardest years of Stalinism and neo-Stalinism, intellectuals such as Müller enjoyed a modicum of freedom to write and produce. Then, as now, the dramatist drew heavily upon the ancients and, above all, upon Shakespeare. In the early '60s it was impossible to write a piece directly about Stalinism. His voice rising above the city din, Müller explains, "One needed these models when one really wanted to pose questions." In this way, theater had an immediate, vital function in the GDR. Pieces may have been censored or banned, but when one finally got two or three hours of stage time, it was free. It was much like the monarchy and proletariat of Shakespeare's day, he says. "For the proletariat, theater was actually the first attempt at democracy."

Past lapses: Yet for Müller, the relationship between theater and democracy, between politics and culture, is far from clear. With a grin he says, "The problem with theater is that it is allowed everything and can do nothing." Smack in the middle of the heated debate over the role of art and the artist in the new Germany, the maverick playwright still finds himself at odds with the establishment. He scorns the belief that "high culture" or the in-vogue concept of a German *Kultur* nation can somehow prevent a relapse into the political atrocities of the past. He maintains that high culture itself is deeply complicit in the legacy of modern barbarism. "As long as freedom is grounded on violence and art on privilege," he says, "artworks will tend to serve as prisons, the masterpieces themselves complicit with the ruling power."

The '80s brought Müller from relative obscurity to the forefront of European theater. Since the Berlin Wall's removal, his pieces are the most produced in Germany, playing to overflow crowds from Freiburg to Rostock. Müller's subject matter is an unlikely one for box-office records: his tableau is history, above all, German history. The condition of the *Deutsche Misere* and the continuity of tragedy and violence in history thread their way as common themes through each of his plays. His works deconstruct the modern condition—exposing the conscious and unconscious structures that have perpetrated themselves from medieval Prussia to the newly united Germany. Like an archaeologist, the director-writer exposes layer upon layer of ossified lies and silence. The structures of modern socialism, as well as those of post-industrial capitalism, rest on the same foundations that justified Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.

Juxtaposer: From his earliest plays, Müller's work has been a polemic with the master of socialist drama, Brecht. In the 1956 play *The Wage Squeezers*, he juxtaposes the newfound "socialist consciousness" of the party-loyal worker in the late '40s to that of his former Nazi colleagues. Written roughly in the style of Brecht's didactic theater, the play won him theater's highest prizes in the GDR. But the East German regime soon soured on the playwright's increasingly bleak evaluation of their new state. His art's form moved steadily away from the Brechtian model, becoming ever more surreal, obtuse, fragmented.

Though his focus shifted from the building of German socialism to the larger dilemma of contemporary Europe, the German questions have remained Müller's reference point. "There never was a zero hour, and there never will be," says Müller from behind his thick, black-framed eyeglasses. He gestures in the direction of Alexanderplatz, where the unification festivities are in full swing, and smiles. West German politicians are peddling the fiction that the "post-war" chapter of their history has finally come to an end. "Politics survives on dispossession and forgetting," he says. "The Federal Republic is simply using the 40 years of the GDR to bury the 12 of the Nazi era. But Auschwitz existed and will always exist—whether the Germans want

to forget it or not."

Dressed to the nines at the elegant Freievolksbühne in West Berlin, the audience queueing up for the long-sold-out premier of *Germania Death in Berlin* seems to confirm Müller's reservations. In the East, critical culture was *verboten*; in the West, it is consumed without effect. At the theater bar he grins shyly, a bit awed by the flattering response. In the same T-shirt and jacket, cigar and scotch in one hand, he recognizes me among his entourage. He raises his big arm around my shoulder, asking: "You think I have time to write these days?" He then shrugs and laughs.

The production of this 1956 piece, directed by the Brecht protégé B.K. Tragelehn, resembles more the style of the early Müller than the multimedia extravaganzas of his recent self-directed work. On the stark stage, figures from Germany's past enter and exit through three looming doorways. Cryptic fragments from the 1918 revolution, the GDR's founding day, Stalin's death and the 1953 East Berlin workers' uprising expose the synchronicity of time. Against the orthodox Marxist notion of a set historical chronology, Müller portrays past, present and future as interwoven in every moment.

Through masks and voices: Whores and revolutionaries, Gestapo and proletarians cross paths. In the flow of history, the vocabulary of truth, discipline and camaraderie are used interchangeably. The result is a macabre collage of subjective voices clashing with the political utopias of the day. The conflict subverts the viewer's common-sense perception of reality, forcing him to examine the incongruities Müller reveals. In one remarkable scene entitled "The Holy Family," a pregnant Joseph Goebbels, with the aid of a gasoline-swilling Hitler, Mother Germania and the Western Allies, gives birth to a wolf-like monster—the Federal Republic. The gangly creature unwraps the Allies' presents, while England, France and the U.S. sit cross-legged on the stage—hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil.

The essence of Müller's aesthetic is the unresolved dialogue of contradiction and irony—exactly that which modern politics deny. "I don't want to step up as 'the author,' as prose writers must," he says. "With theater I can have masks, lots of masks, and say 'that' through one mask and the opposite through another." In this way, theater is a valuable artform under dictatorships. Müller describes his plays as an "erotic game," a "prolonged orgasm between the public and the actors" that climaxes in the final scene. "In this sense, theater is a corrective to politics," he says, "because what's disappeared from politics is the erotic. When politicians become impotent, power serves as an ersatz for the erotic and the sexual."

Irony is equally central to Müller's enigmatic persona. His views on politics and culture must be difficult to reconcile with his new position as president of the still-East Berlin Academy of Arts. After decades compromised by the cultural policies of the old regime, the institute looked hard for a clean name to put it back on its feet. "I had only one argument against it: I don't have the slightest desire to take this post. And that's no argument," says the freshly elected president. He wants to convert the former bastion of provincialism into an international organization with a rotating presidency occupied by a non-German. No less contrary to his decades-long themes, he hopes to cultivate a "state- and ideology-free space" where innovation in all the arts may occur.

Müller's unlikely position is in fact the ultimate statement of his art's form. Neither his plays nor his politics offers the ready-made solutions that people await so eagerly from their public figures. His dialectic of contradiction is an impulse to confront the vicious cycle of history. "Naturally, art must disturb," he says. "And now we [in the united Germany] must determine how and what it can and must disturb."

Team players: The Justice Department has a backlog of 21,000 unprosecuted S&L cases. Missing from that case load is an examination of Neil Bush's involvement in the failure of Silverado Savings of Denver—the bailout of which will cost the taxpayers an estimated \$1 billion. In mid-September the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation announced that it was suing young Bush and other Silverado officials for \$200 million. One week later the Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS) brought Neil before an administrative law judge. The OTS asked the judge to order Neil to refrain from becoming involved in any future conflicts of interest with federally insured financial institutions. Tough stuff. As for the Justice Department, it has brought no charges in the Silverado case despite indications that Neil and two of his real-estate-developing business associates played financial games with millions of dollars in Silverado loans—loans that Neil had voted to approve. A cynic might say that the Justice Department is not taking action in this case because it involves the president's son and the president's political supporters. One of young Bush's business partners, a man who defaulted on tens of millions of dollars of Silverado loans, is Kenneth Good. In 1988 Good gave \$100,000 to George Bush's presidential campaign, thereby joining a group of the president's financial backers known as Team 100.

Our spoil: Robert Bass, a Fort Worth financier, did very well in the Reagan-Bush administration's S&L fire sale. In late 1988 the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, the agency that regulates S&Ls, sold the insolvent American Savings and Loan of California to the Robert Bass Group for \$410 million raised by Bass and \$2 billion put up by the federal government in the form of FSLIC subsidies. In 1989 American Savings and Loan earned Bass \$122 million in profits, a 30 percent return on the original investment. It now appears there could be another sweet deal in the works. Last July, Bass Enterprises Production Co. agreed to finance the drilling of three oil wells in Bahrain for the Harken Energy Corporation of Dallas. The cost of this drilling is estimated at \$25 million. The *Houston Post's* Brewton reports, "President Bush's oldest son, George Bush Jr., is a director, large stockholder and \$120,000-a-year consultant to [Harken Energy Corporation], a Texas oil company whose potentially lucrative drilling rights in the Persian Gulf are being protected by American troops and would be jeopardized if Iraq invaded Saudi Arabia." According to Brewton, Harken signed an exclusive deal in January with the government of Bahrain for "the exclusive right to explore for, develop, produce, transport and market oil and gas throughout most of Bahrain's offshore territories. ... Energy analysts marveled at how Harken, a relatively small, unknown company with operations primarily in Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma, was able to garner the Bahrain rights. This is an incredible deal, unbelievable for this small company," [an energy analyst] told *Forbes* magazine. [Forbes, however, failed to mention the Bush connection.] It is not known how many shares of Harken stock George Jr. owns. The company's 1989 report says he held 345,426 shares—or just 1.1 percent of the total stock. On the other hand, 1989 news reports identified George Jr. as the second-largest Harken shareholder behind Harvard University, which owns 30 percent of the company. What is known is that recently the president's son did some divesting. In the weeks before the Iraqi invasion Bush sold 225,000 shares of his Harken stock, but he doesn't recall when—some time in "June or July," he says. By selling early, he made about \$191,000 more than he would have if he sold after the invasion, when the price of Harken stock fell from \$3.60 to \$2.75 a share. This raises the question: what did young George know and when did he know it?

Graphic bananas: An S&L-connected figure who is defending one way—not necessarily "our" way—of life is Carl Lindner of Cincinnati. Lindner is an old friend and business associate of jailed S&L crime figure Charles Keating. In their book *Inside Job: Looting of America's Savings and Loans*, Stephen Pizzo, Mary Fricker and Paul Muolo write that in 1979 the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) accused Lindner and Keating of a long list of SEC violations, including using a bank they owned "to make loans to themselves without collateral, extend themselves new loans to cover the interest they owed on the old loans, roll over loans as they matured without demanding payment and guarantee loans that other banks had made to Keating and others." Keating and Lindner, who owns Chiquita—formerly United Fruit—join Bass and Good as members of President Bush's Team 100 financial-support group. But the Bush presidency is not the only cause Linder supports. Like Keating, Lindner has a keen interest in graphic depictions of human sexuality. His fortune funds Citizens for Community Values, the anti-pornography group that spearheaded the campaign against the Robert Mapplethorpe exhibit at the Cincinnati Contemporary Arts Center.

A political purge

Renew America Now (RAN) has come up with a novel approach to ridding Congress of fat cats and impropriety: don't vote for *any* incumbents this November. "Congress needs an oil change, and I don't know anybody that retains a used quart—even for sentimental reasons," says RAN founder Rick Hotchkiss. Because the nation can no longer afford to support a self-serving Congress, the Boston-based group is urging voters to cast aside party affiliation for a 100 percent turnover in the House and 35 new members in the Senate. RAN plans to use its funds for a national advertising campaign urging voters to "reminisce" about the S&L bailout, for example, before pulling the lever.

Hungry for justice

As long as the world's leaders maintain their emphasis on military might over sound social policies, half a billion people across the globe will remain chronically hungry, according to the Hunger 1990 report released by the Bread for the World Institute on Hunger and Development. Worldwide military spending is now estimated at \$1 trillion. Nearly one-third is spent by the U.S., and the Third World share increased from 7 to 19 percent between 1960 and 1987. Wars disrupt food production and distribution, lead to environmental degradation and create refugees, says the report, leaving women and children among hunger's greatest victims. Nearly 40,000 children under the age of five die each day from preventable infections and malnutrition—the same as if 100 jumbo jets, each loaded with 400 infants and children, crashed every 14 minutes. The report's conclusion: a demilitarized world could easily meet all of its food needs.

To Public Enemy, with love

Music, it has been said, calms the savage breast. On that note, an African-American Marine stationed in Saudi Arabia is asking the political rap group Public Enemy to send over some race-affirming music and paraphernalia—"something that would bring our morale and hype to an all-time high." According to the letter, black Marines are bombarded with the "hype" of their white counterparts—T-shirts sporting sadistic slogans, flat-top haircuts and the music of Guns 'N' Roses. But the same black Marines are forbidden to wear "box" haircuts—well within grooming regulations—and T-shirts reading "Black By Nature, Proud By Choice" or "Black By Popular Demand," because they are deemed "racist."

Some people's kids

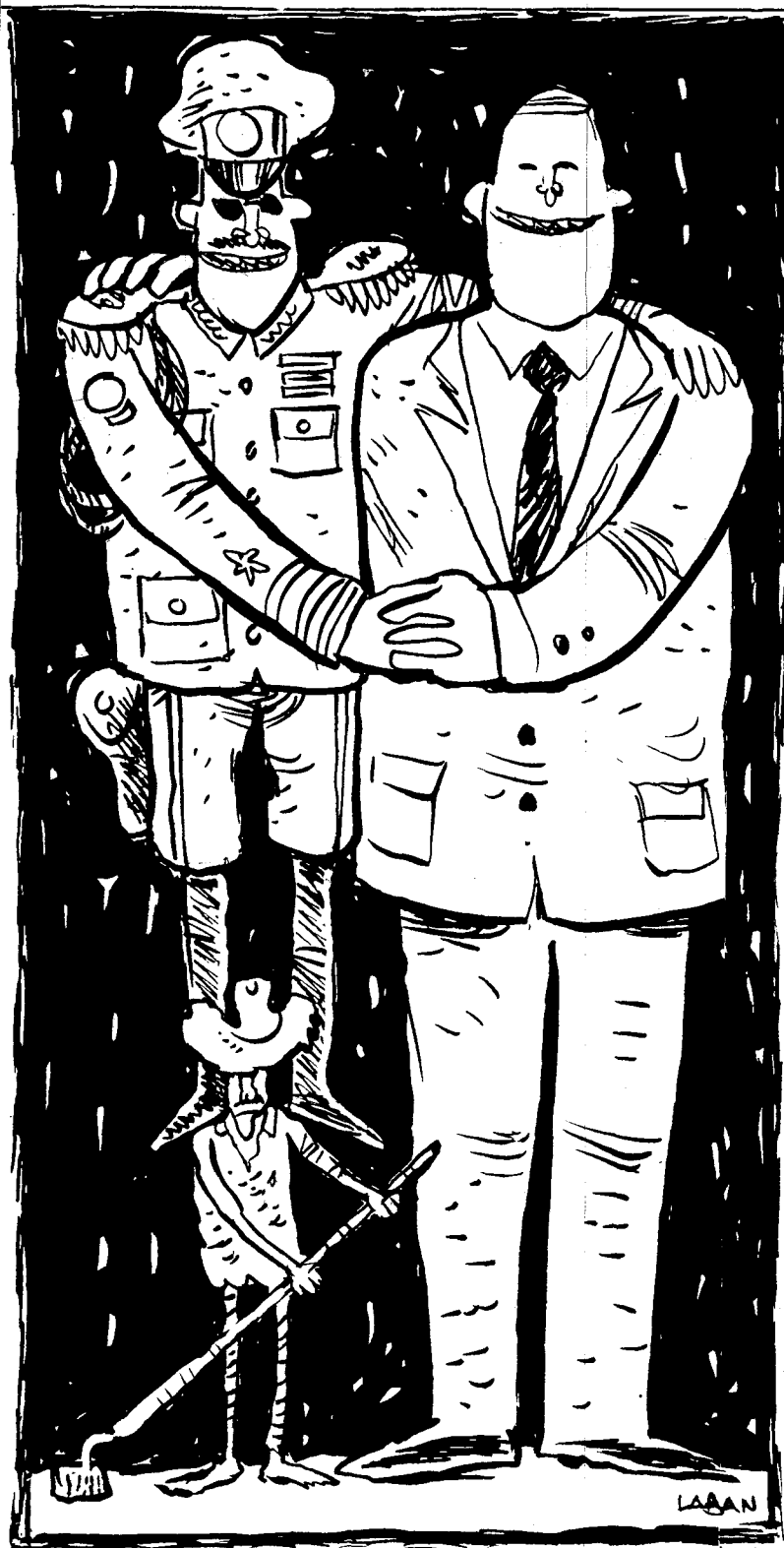
The campaign of Colorado Republican Senate candidate Hank Brown took a beating last month when his son was charged with attacking a "long-haired" university student and forcing him to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. The young Harry Brown, 21, and two friends are accused of attacking Jamie Breitzman on a street at the University of Northern Colorado. Breitzman claims he started to recite the pledge but was repeatedly struck by the drunken Brown for not placing his right hand over his heart. "He [Brown] said, 'Say it with fire, say it with passion, say it like you mean it,'" Breitzman recalls. Brown and one of his companions were charged with third-degree assault two months after the incident was reported. According to Breitzman, police took interest only after someone notified the *Greeley Tribune*—in the congressional district Rep. Brown has represented for 10 years.

Truman made him do it

Curtis LeMay, the U.S. general who supervised the 1945 atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the 1948 airlift on Berlin, died Oct. 1 in California at the age of 83. LeMay, who died of a heart attack, asserted years after World War II that the bombings were useless in obtaining the surrender of Japan. "We dropped the bombs because Truman told me to," LeMay said during a 1985 interview. Air Force chief of staff from 1961 to 1965, the same LeMay declared during Vietnam that unless the North Vietnamese retreated, "we're going to bomb them back into the Stone Age."

We snooze, you lose

Wyoming Republican gubernatorial candidate Mary Mead is sorry for a recent campaign speech, but not because of any objectionable statements she might have made. "I got reports saying it [the speech] was boring," said Mead, "and that I hadn't really said anything." One week after the Sept. 19 speech to the Wyoming Association of County Officials, Mead wrote a formal letter of apology, "not necessarily to change anybody's mind about me, but just to let them know that it mattered."



A bomb for El Salvador's preferred trading status

WASHINGTON—The ability of the Salvadoran government to sustain both the rapidly deteriorating economy and its 10-year war against the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) depends on U.S. assistance—in the form of aid and trade. While the U.S. Senate considers a 50 percent cut in military aid, a group of labor and human-rights organizations is making an end run on the trade portion of U.S. support for the Salvadoran economy.

In a case that may have tactical implications for other solidarity labor struggles, the organizations are asking that El Salvador be dropped from the official U.S. list of beneficiary developing countries under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), which allows El Salvador to export the majority of its foreign trade duty-free to the U.S.

The groups are basing their case

on a 1984 provision of the U.S. Trade Act that links GSP status with compliance with internationally recognized worker rights, including the right to associate, organize and bargain collectively.

Representatives of various U.S. labor-rights committees, the AFL-CIO and Americas Watch were among the groups requesting denial of preferential trading benefits at hearings late last month by a subcommittee composed of representatives from the departments of Labor, State, Treasury, Agriculture and Commerce. They were joined by two Salvadoran unions—one from the right, the National Union of Workers and Peasants (UNOC), and one from the left, the National Union Federation of Salvadoran Workers (FENASTRAS).

Officially, the subcommittee must base its decision on fairly narrow legalistic grounds—if it can be established that labor rights have been consistently violated and that no effective steps have been taken to rectify the pattern of abuses, then the preferential status should be denied. But political considerations will un-

doubtedly be a factor.

Nor will the most egregious human-rights violations, such as assassinations and bombings aimed at labor, figure prominently in the decision. These abuses "fall under the criminal justice code," according to Ron Dobson, the Department of Labor representative on the subcommittee. "The right to life," he continues, "is not listed as a worker right" included in GSP guidelines.

At the hearings, the petitioners challenged this mechanistic interpretation. "It is obvious that when union offices are blown up and union organizers are tortured and killed, the rights to organize and bargain collectively are violated," said Philip Kete, a Washington-based lawyer for FENASTRAS.

Gerardo Diaz, who also testified for FENASTRAS, was a vivid reminder of the reality of the threat to unionists. He was wounded in the October 1989 bombing of FENASTRAS headquarters in which 10 people were killed and 40 wounded. "It is clear," he told the panel, "that as long as they have preferential treatment, they will see it as a green light to continue persecution of union members."

In a graphic demonstration of the new configuration of opposition forces in El Salvador, Diaz, head of FENASTRAS, was joined at the hearing by Amanda Villatoro, a leader of the right-wing UNOC.

This tactical unity between UNOC and FENASTRAS reflects the new, broad-based opposition movement that has coalesced in the wake of the far-right ARENA election victory last March. By emphasizing common concerns, such traditional opposition elements as leftist unions, human-rights and church groups have sought out alliances with former supporters of the late President Jose Napoleon Duarte. Disgruntled owners of small and medium-sized businesses, more conservative church groups and all the political parties—except ARENA—have begun to push for a negotiated solution that incorporates an amelioration of the social and economic injustices that they acknowledge as precipitating and prolonging the war. ARENA and its military supporters have been increasingly isolated by this alliance.

The decision on El Salvador's GSP status will be handed down in April by President Bush, acting on the recommendation of the U.S. trade representative. Until then, petitioners hope that the U.S. threat of a change in trade benefits will act to deter violence against unions. While the impact of being dropped from the GSP rolls would not be as serious a blow to the government of El Salvador as a cut in military aid, the petitioners hope it will send a message that the Salvadoran elite can understand: continued repression and war are bad for business.

—Terry Allen

By David Moberg

Tireless, folksy politicking from small-town Indiana

BY CONVENTIONAL POLITICAL WISDOM, JIM Jontz shouldn't be in Congress. But since 1986 Jontz, a populist, environmentalist Democrat who cites Eugene Debs as his political hero, has represented the heavily Republican, largely rural and small-town Fifth Congressional District in north central Indiana. The Republicans are pitting a well-educated, well-heeled entrepreneur with unquenchable faith in the free market against him in this year's election, but Jontz's savvy, folksy and tireless politicking should overcome the natural odds once again.

The two candidates divide sharply on economics. Republican John Johnson, 46, is a disciple of economist Milton Friedman and Barry Goldwater, an advocate of less government spending and minimal intervention in the economy. Jontz, 38, is a populist who wants the government to act as defender of the "middle class" and the environment, whether through aid for education and child care or stricter regulation of corporations.

But Johnson is something of a libertarian on social issues. He has largely rejected the real potential in this district of running on such right-wing cultural issues as flag-burning (both candidates opposed a constitutional amendment), funding for the National Endowment for the Arts or abortion (both are pro-choice: Jontz unequivocally, Johnson with hedging he hopes will win some of the ardent anti-abortion votes he needs).

Sympathy for the middle class: Jontz boldly sketches the class implications of Johnson's free-market conservatism. "The problem with John Johnson is not that he's rich," Jontz says, although his campaign highlights millionaire Johnson's sale of his high-tech magnet company to a French company cited for trade violations, "but that he sides with the rich on every issue. He's against more aid to higher education because he feels that students ought to be smart enough to figure out how valuable higher education is. He defends provisions in the tax codes that touch the rich lightly. He says the problem with the price of oil is that it's too low. He doesn't have any sympathy at all with the middle-income person who pays the bills. Johnson worships the free market. He objects to anything—including an increase in the minimum wage, family leave, notification of plant closings or investigation of oil price gouging—as interfering with the market."

Jontz thinks that voters are showing "greater awareness of the extent to which the policies of the '80s benefited the rich at everyone's expense. The savings and loan bailout—paying for a party we didn't attend—is a big factor. The debate over capital gains and the income-tax bubble has awakened people. I have people coming to my town meetings denouncing policies benefiting the rich. That's not what I heard so much a few years ago. There was institutional anger against oil companies or utilities then, but not the rich."

Jontz started in politics fighting an Army Corps of Engineers dam project and won his first state legislative race over a "safe" Republican incumbent by a two-vote margin. In 1986 the long-term Republican incumbent retired, and Jontz won, in part because many Republicans and independents were strong-



Democratic congressional candidate Jim Jontz hits the populist trail.

ly turned off by the right-wing evangelical Christian preacher who won the GOP primary.

The unlikely congressman has held on because in both style and substance he closely identifies with the working and middle-class voters of his district. Widely known for riding a battered old Schwinn bicycle in local parades, Jontz ceaselessly travels his district and maintains open lines of communication with voters. His office works hard at nitty-gritty constituent service.

But he also articulates these voters' outrage at irresponsible corporations and the rich, attacking the savings and loan bailout, advocating higher taxes for the wealthy and criticizing unfair foreign trade. Although he supports broad-based social programs, from new child-care funding to Social Security, and voted for the Congressional Black Caucus' "quality of life" budget this year, Jontz supports a balanced-budget amendment (arguing that the deficit is used as a political weapon against any new social initiatives). To balance the budget he favors bigger military cuts and more progressive taxation.

By pushing higher farm prices and more aid to veterans (for victims of Agent Orange or of post-traumatic stress disorder) he has won support in his district from some traditional Republicans (he lost the Farm Bureau endorsement this year, largely for his votes on environmental issues). He wins visceral points with his district by voting against congressional pay raises then turning his pay hike into a scholarship fund.

Jontz is making his biggest splash on environmental issues. A vigorous proponent of

recycling, he has proposed giving states some authority to ban dumping of out-of-state garbage—a hot issue as desperate urban areas in the East look to Indiana for dump sites. He successfully amended this year's farm bill to encourage environmentally safer, sustainable agriculture.

The price you pay: Jontz raised hackles in the Pacific Northwest, where he was hanged in effigy, when as a member of the forestry subcommittee he introduced legislation last spring to protect ancient forests. "I realized that, like civil rights couldn't be resolved within the South, the ancient forest issues can't be resolved within the Northwest," Jontz said, explaining his involvement. But Jontz's principles have cost him: the Carpenters union not only withheld its endorsement and money, he said, but kept him off labor's "marginal list." That has made it harder for this pro-labor congressman to raise the money he needs to match his well-funded opponent, who has received major contributions from the timber industry and homebuilders. (In 1988, thanks largely to labor political-action committees, Jontz outspent his opponent nearly 3-to-1 and won by 56 to 44 percent.)

Self-identified Republicans outnumber Democrats 42 percent to 30 percent in the district, and the GOP's Johnson says his primary goal is to "reach the one in four self-identified Republicans who voted for [Jontz] in 1988 and to get my share of the independents." His problem is that Jontz is better known, well-liked and respected for his personal service and accessibility. So Johnson is resorting to a well-worn Republican strategy,

portraying Jontz as a tax-and-spend Democrat, a "liberal" who is "out of touch" with his conservative district.

Yet the Johnson campaign has not targeted many specific examples of how it would spend less than Jontz: he criticizes Jontz's support of the Black Caucus budget (there are very few blacks in the district), as well as support for child care and education aid. But Johnson would cut the military budget more slowly than Jontz—a fuzzy and not clearly winning position, since nearly half of constituents polled by Jontz favored

ELECTIONS '90

cutting military spending. He advocates a two-year freeze on all spending except for Medicare, Social Security, interest and "a few true safety-net programs."

In an intriguing move for a Republican, Johnson proposed a national health-care plan, AmeriCare. The plan doesn't tinker with private insurance, instead giving everyone a voucher to buy some form of health insurance. Johnson's plan is motivated in part by concern about the health-insurance burden on American corporations.

Unlike many pro-business Republicans, Johnson—who took over an ailing firm in a leveraged buyout and transformed it into a high-tech success—says many U.S. corporations are failing to reinvest or innovate. He also says that many takeovers are destructive ("we're too concerned with financial trends and not real productive activity"), and that the country must reverse its slipping manufacturing power by saving more and "improving human capital" (he wants to set tougher standards but does not advocate spending more on education). Although he sold out to a foreign company, he admits if foreign ownership "gets too much out of hand we will cease to be a center of research and development and become satellite manufacturers."

But Johnson consistently rejects more federal spending or intervention, favoring a freer market in which he would phase out all farm support and related environmental controls on farming. He opposes Jontz's efforts to restrict interstate trash dumping and his legislation to protect ancient forests.

An admitted "idea person, an ideologue," Johnson wanders in libertarian directions: he admits that Milton Friedman's argument for legalization of drugs "has all the logic on his side," but he worries that drug use would rise. At the same time, Johnson realizes that by not hitting hard on the right-wing cultural issues, he risks losing a part of his base. The Wirthlin Group, his consultants, said that 24 percent of the district identify as single issue pro-life voters.

The race reflects the great political schism among American voters: Johnson appeals to their free-market ideology, Jontz to their growing sense that in the real world the rich are getting richer at their expense. Johnson has had trouble straddling the increasingly strained alliance of upper-class economic conservatives and lower-middle-class cultural right-wingers in the Republicans, while Jontz has been working to create a populist glue to a more class-conscious melange of working and middle-class voters. The results of the clash will have political meaning beyond the cornfields and auto-parts factories of northern Indiana.

ALTHOUGH THE LATE HAROLD WASHINGTON has been absent for nearly three years, he maintains a powerful presence in his beloved city. The 1987 death of Chicago's first black mayor left a void that grows with each failed attempt to achieve his goals of black empowerment and coalition politics. Washington's disparate acolytes have spun off into different directions since his fatal heart attack, and prospects that they will again join forces do not look good.

While each faction claims his spirit, one has claimed his name. The Harold Washington Party (HWP) is an independent political group that was hastily organized in 1989 by Alderman Timothy Evans for his doomed mayoral campaign against Democrat

POLITICS

Richard M. Daley, son of the legendary late Mayor Richard J. Daley. The party currently is awaiting a ruling by the Illinois Supreme Court to determine its eligibility to appear on the ballot for upcoming elections November 6.

The case was appealed to the state's highest court after two controversial rulings—both based on ambiguous statutory procedures—were handed down in the lower courts.

Both the circuit court and the district court where the arguments were heard are controlled by the Democrats, who are terrified by the possibility that the all-black HWP could attract enough votes to insure Republican victories in the upcoming political races.

"The decisions of the two judges who ruled on this case have disenfranchised a half million voters [those garnered by Evans in '89]," says R. Eugene Pincham, a former appellate court judge and a candidate and legal representative of the newly formed independent party. Pincham, who lost the Democratic primary for Cook County Board president last April, is now leading the slate of HWP candidates in the general election.

History lessons: Washington's death provoked a bitter succession battle. Evans, Washington's former floor leader and the closest thing to an heir apparent, was the African-American community's initial choice to succeed the felled mayor. But black Alderman Eugene Sawyer was chosen as acting mayor in December 1987 through a contested in-house process directed by the laws of succession.

Sawyer's ascension, however, was engineered by many of the same white aldermen who had consistently opposed Washington, and so he was widely denounced in the black community. While Sawyer eventually gained some support during his tenure, many black Chicagoans and most black leadership continued to stand by Evans. There was little doubt that Evans would challenge the acting mayor in the special election held to complete Washington's term.

Enticed by the possibility of two candidates splitting the black vote, Daley launched his own campaign to win the 1989 primary. Evans, prodded by community leaders, decided to sit out the primary to allow Sawyer a one-on-one confrontation with challenger Daley. Daley emerged victorious, and Evans formed the HWP to mount a third-party challenge in the April 4 general election.

Evans appeared to lose interest in the HWP



Struggling to fill a black political void in Chicago

after his defeat. Although many of his supporters continued to tout it as a platform for a future mayoral run, the party was essentially moribund. But another group of black organizers—many of whom were not linked

Harold Washington's disparate acolytes have spun off into different directions since his fatal heart attack, and prospects that they will again join forces do not look good.

to Evans or his core supporters—were working behind the scenes to reinvigorate the HWP and use its legal structure and symbolic value to push the independent movement forward.

Deepening gloom: "A lot of us who had worked so long in the trenches of independent politics saw a golden opportunity to use the Harold Washington Party to actually institutionalize a political movement," ex-

plains Richard Barnett, widely acknowledged as one of Chicago's most respected political strategists and credited with orchestrating Washington's impressive electoral showing on the city's West Side. Barnett adds that Daley's victory in 1989 and the subsequent splits among various factions of the city's African-American community left many organizers frustrated and dispirited.

"It's my personal feeling that black people in this city were victims of one of the most ingenious political conspiracies ever to be hatched by the Democratic machine," he says. "The selection of Sawyer as acting mayor was a master stroke, based on the old divide-and-conquer strategy. It worked beautifully for them, and the result is Mayor Richard M. Daley."

"It seemed to many folks that all of the hard-fought gains we had accomplished through the years of [Washington's] leadership were going up in smoke," Barnett continues. "All of the things Harold had done to cripple the Democratic machine seemed now to be in vain. Remember, we had been working like crazy since 1983 for this cause, and to see it suddenly come to a halt in 1989 was tremendously disheartening."

Here comes the judge: Pincham's entry into the race for Cook County Board presi-

dent energized those organizers who had struggled so doggedly to build an independent movement. Charismatic and articulate, Pincham embodied some of the same characteristics that made Washington such an imposing political figure. His slashing oratorical style already had earned him considerable celebrity within the black community.

What's more, Pincham's professional credentials were impeccable. He practiced law with a private firm from 1951 to 1976—specializing as a trial and appeals attorney—and gained a widespread reputation as a peerless advocate. In 1976 he was elected a circuit court judge assigned to the criminal division, and in 1984 he went on to become an appellate court judge.

During the campaign, Pincham's opponents accused him of being too lenient on rape defendants during his days as a judge. While he heatedly denied the charge and accused his accusers of resorting to "Willie Horton-type" innuendo, he made clear his position on the criminal justice system's treatment of African-American defendants.

"When I was a judge, the number of young men who came before me for trial, particularly black ones, was disturbing and appalling," said Pincham in a pre-election interview last April. "But I'm even more disturbed because the system is not doing anything to prevent, deter or minimize it. You take an offender from a semi-immoral setting, send him to jail, which is a totally immoral setting, leave him there for 10 years with other totally immoral people, and then give him no kind of even simple academic training—but you expect him to come out more righteous. That's almost a psychological impossibility."

Panther to pussycat: Not only has Pincham led the legal battle to keep the HWP on the ballot but he has capitalized on the notoriety provoked by those battles. Media accounts of the Democrats' fervent efforts to oust the party have generated a lot of anger among the city's African-Americans. At a recent HWP rally, an unexpectedly large crowd overflowed a South Side church and enthusiastically denounced the Democrats' attempt to thwart the party's candidates.

Some of the more scathing comments were aimed at the black Democrats who are working against the HWP. One of those is Bobby Rush, former Black Panther leader and now city alderman. "Bobby's situation is particularly pitiful," said Thomas Todd, a longtime member of the independent movement and a co-founder of Operation PUSH. "Here is a former Black Panther who became a damned pussycat, meekly doing the bidding of the 'massa' in the big house," added Todd, to deafening applause.

Rush has argued that the HWP is a Republican front, being paid to damage the Democratic Party at a time when it is becoming more accommodating to African-Americans. Rush is not alone in his contention, and David Reed, the HWP's chairman, does have Republican connections in his past. Moreover, some of the HWP's most visible supporters have also announced their support for the Illinois Republican gubernatorial candidate, Jim Edgar.

Party members argue they are supporting Edgar because the Democratic candidate, Neil Hartigan, failed to support Harold Washington in the 1987 general election. "But that's not the main point," says Barnett. "We have no allegiances to either of the two parties. They both have ignored us, disrespected us or simply taken us for granted. The main point is, that game is over." □

By John P. Canham-Clyne

WASHINGTON

IF YOU'RE WONDERING HOW THE GOOD OL' GANG who brought you the Iran-contra affair managed to get away from it all so cleanly, take a look at the 1991 Intelligence Authorization Act that the Senate passed by a voice vote on August 4.

This is the second congressional attempt to reform the intelligence oversight process since Iran-contra. The first attempt died in the House in 1988. This year's legislation may actually pass both houses, but, despite the language of the reform, the net effect will be to institutionalize the systemic failures that led to Iran-contra in the first place.

It is tempting to think that the bill's author, Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman David Boren (D-OK), pulled a fast one on the Senate at the behest of his buddies in the intelligence community by sneaking such pathetically weak restrictions through while everyone was preparing to leave for the annual August recess. To believe this, however, is to fall victim to a fatally false assumption.

"Pretty please, tell us": While the Iran-contra hearings ought to have been a public constitutional confrontation between the president and the Congress over the war-making power and the power of the purse, they were, in fact, merely a plea by Congress to be clued in on the shocking secrets kept by the executive (see *In These Times*, April 25). The Senate oversight bill continues in the same vein, conceding every constitutional and substantive issue raised by Iran-contra, while politely asking the president to inform the congressional intelligence committees of every covert action.

The congressional totem is the presidential finding. Under the bill, as long as the president signs a written finding, the executive branch will be able to continue doing virtually anything it wants. In *The National Security Constitution: Sharing Power After the Iran-Contra Affair*, Yale University Law School Professor Harold Koh wrote that the president often "constru[es] laws designed to restrain his actions as authorizations," moving into "statutory lacunae" that offer him the most freedom to act.

Under the rubric of restraint the new legislation would legitimize the following:

- Any part of the executive branch would be able to conduct covert actions. Existing law requires the president to report CIA covert actions to the intelligence committees, under the reasonable premise that secret policy actions are likely to be carried out by secret agencies. But in a perfect illustration of Koh's observation of executive tendencies, successive administrations since 1974 have farmed covert operations out to a proliferating number of intelligence organs within the Defense Department, Drug Enforcement Agency and the National Security Council (NSC) staff. The Reagan administration, for example, specialized in finding wiggle room in intelligence restrictions, as in the silly debate over whether or not the NSC staff was "an entity ... engaged in intelligence activities" and thus covered by the Boland Amendment.

Rather than confine covert actions to a single agency or a few specific agencies, the Senate bill authorizes operations by "departments, agencies or entities of the U.S. government," provided, of course, that the president sign a finding.

- The bill continues the privatization of U.S. foreign policy. It would simply require the president to disclose in each finding

FROM: The President
TO: Selected Lap-dog Congressmen

This is to inform you that some unnameable part or parts of the executive branch may or may not be engaged in activities that may or may not be covert or secret, such as possibly hiring death squads, funding right wing political parties, organizing assassinations, doing that destabilizing thing, putting the squeeze on people ~~we~~ we don't like, selling drugs to pay for activities we do like, and maybe doing some other things which I deem necessary to defend the principles which I hold dear and which you do to.

Thank you for your continued support.



COVERT ACTION

Intelligence reform package perpetuates secret violence

whether funding or participation by private individuals or foreign nationals is "contemplated" in a particular covert action. When asked whether this language conceded the legality of one of the most disturbing aspects of the Iran-contra affair, Jim Currie, Senate Intelligence Committee press secretary, offered this analogy: "If you are engaged in illegal gambling activities, the IRS requires you to report your income from gambling activities. They are not saying that your gambling is legal."

Aside from the felicitous comparison of George Bush, William Webster and Dick Cheney to the likes of Al Capone, this is hogwash. Income-tax reporting requirements place the leaders of organized crime in an impossible situation. On the one hand, if

foreign-policy objectives." Yet all of the most heinous covert actions of the last 30 years were in support of identifiable foreign-policy objectives, and were deemed by their perpetrators not to be merely "important" to the national security but essential.

- The bill gives away congressional authority to disapprove of intelligence operations, saying "nothing contained in this title shall be construed as requiring the approval of the intelligence committees as a condition precedent to such activities."

- The bill surrenders to the notion promulgated by conservatives that the president has inherent constitutional authority to conduct covert operations: "Nothing contained in this title shall be construed as a limitation on the power of the president to initiate such

The bill surrenders to the notion promulgated by conservatives that the president has inherent constitutional authority to conduct covert operations.

mobsters report income from their criminal activities, they give the government evidence it needs to prosecute them. On the other hand, if they fail to report the income, they face prosecution on tax evasion. The bill does not place executive branch officials in a similar Catch-22 because it neither prescribes penalties for the use of third-party funding of covert operations nor sanctions for failure to report them to the intelligence committees.

- The bill allows covert actions for the flimsiest of rationales—when the president finds that they are "necessary to support the foreign-policy objectives of the U.S. and are important to the national security of the U.S." The 1988 bill that passed the House but died in the Senate included the supposedly tougher qualifier of "identifiable

activities in a manner consistent with his powers conferred by the Constitution." Incredibly, conservatives in Congress claim that even the feeble restrictions in this legislation are an unconstitutional infringement on presidential authority.

However, as Koh puts it, "You don't have to be a president-basher to oppose this bill. A strong president is not the same thing as an autonomous president." He envisions a robust presidency embedded in a reinvigorated system of checks and balances.

But the bill creates no such system. Said Senate Intelligence staffer Currie, "All we are trying to do here is get the president to inform Congress whenever there is a covert action."

Unfortunately, the bill gives the president an escape route. "On rare occasions" he

would be able to report covert actions after they have already begun, giving him the option of presenting Congress with a *fait accompli*, with secret warriors already in the field.

An additional provision opens a way for the president to divide and conquer Congress. When the president "determines it is essential to meet extraordinary circumstances," he would be able to limit reporting to a group of eight senior House and Senate leaders, allowing the administration to shield controversial secret policy from any aggressive junior members who might question the administration's secret activities.

"The best we can do": The bill has received support from one surprising source. Gary Stern of the Washington office of the American Civil Liberties Union said, "The ACLU continues to oppose covert action. However, as long as it is used, we also support the oversight process."

ACLU support is contingent on a House-Senate conference committee adopting language from the 1988 House bill. This year's bill affirmatively authorizes the president to conduct covert action. The 1988 bill couched authorization in negative language, reading, "The president may *not* authorize the conduct of covert actions ... *unless*" he determines that they are necessary and produces a finding.

If that wording is incorporated into the current bill, it is a "modest improvement," according to Stern. Existing law requires the CIA director and the department heads to report covert actions to Congress. The change in language would for the first time place responsibility for reporting covert actions to Congress directly onto the president's shoulders.

The ACLU said that it supports the bill because it realizes that, with the exception of a handful of House members, no one on Capitol Hill opposes covert action and very few support stringent restrictions on it. Any serious attempt to curtail presidential authority would require a two-thirds majority in each house, because any restrictive legislation would surely be vetoed. It's doubtful that even one-third of either chamber supports real restrictions.

Currie acknowledged that fact in responding to a blistering and accurate critique of the current legislation by the Christic Institute, which played a leading role in exposing Iran-contra abuses. "Christic wants to stop all covert action, and that's a separate issue entirely," he said. "They are free to deal with the abstract ideal—we have to deal with the votes we have."

Sadly, Congress lacks the votes to carry out its constitutional duties. Cheerleaders for the national security state insist that Congress is too inefficient to decide whether or not to pursue covert actions in this "dangerous world." They fail to acknowledge that efficiency in government can be an enemy of life, limb and liberty.

Congress was given the war power so that we would be slow to anger and use force only as a last resort. War is horrible enough. Covert action compounds the horror with cowardice, spilling blood and denying responsibility for it.

The 1991 Intelligence Authorization Act, expected to go into conference committee this week, perpetuates four decades of secret violence and lies in the name of national security. □

John P. Canham-Clyne is a Washington, D.C.-based freelance journalist.

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Budget

Continued from page 3

corporate lobbyists their cherished reduction in capital-gains taxes by cutting the rate from 28 to 24 percent. In doing so, he would concede their argument that capital-gains reductions are crucial to economic growth, even though recent studies by the Economic Policy Institute and Congressional Budget Office suggest otherwise. And the combination of higher marginal rates and a capital-gains cut would be a big boost to the tax-shelter industry.

During a press conference the day Bentsen first aired his proposals, Bush hinted that he might accept the deal, but he then backed down after talking to Republican senators who do not want the stigma of passing any tax increase, even on the very rich, and who are also afraid that a tax increase will hasten the onset of a recession. Bush's rejection of

the Bentsen deal puts the Democrats and the White House back where they started at the beginning of the summit negotiations in May. And if they cannot resolve this issue by October 19, then another Capitol shut-down looms.

Underlying this quarrel are several deeper issues that have plagued budget negotiations over the last decade. Most people, including left-wing Democrats like Traficant and right-wing Republicans like William Dannemeyer (R-CA), do not believe that it is necessary to raise taxes. They think there is sufficient waste in government—whether in military or non-military spending—to get by without any increases. And they are ready to oust any politician who thinks otherwise.

In addition, the public as well as the politicians are unsure of what the budget's economic function is. For the last two decades, the public has heard repeated predictions of doom if the deficit were not cut or

eliminated, but none have come to pass. How important is it to reduce the deficit? Is it so urgent that taxes must be raised and crucial programs such as Medicare cut?

Encouraging cynicism: Given the public's doubts about the process, it is not clear who will be the political winners in this budget battle. The Democrats at press time were rejoicing because they had embarrassed Bush and because the Republicans were fighting among themselves over whether they should have supported the president. Indeed, last week Bush suffered the first significant defeat of his presidency—a defeat stemming directly from his abysmal lack of any domestic program.

But as the wrangling continues and the November election nears, the Republicans, rather than the Democrats, could be the ones to benefit. Increased public cynicism about government tends to favor the Republicans and their economic philosophy. And hostility

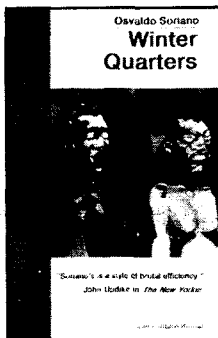
toward incumbents—which has been fanned by Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-GA) and his allies for the last two years—favors Republicans simply because they are the minority party in Congress.

Republicans also have continued to monopolize the issue of economic growth, while Democrats either present themselves as the tribunes of particular interest groups—from Medicare recipients to New Englanders dependent on heating oil—or as the scourges of the wealthy. As the last decade's elections have demonstrated, Americans are very concerned about economic growth, and they do not readily respond to generalized populist appeals against the rich. It's one thing to attack Charles Keating and quite another to go after everyone who makes over \$100,000.

In calling for capital-gains cuts and in resisting any tax increases, Republicans may not be contributing to economic growth but they at least are talking about it. By focusing on issues of equity rather than growth, the Democrats appear to be the party of special interests—even if the interests they represent are far broader than those of the Republicans. □

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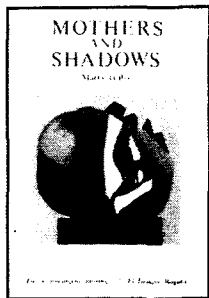
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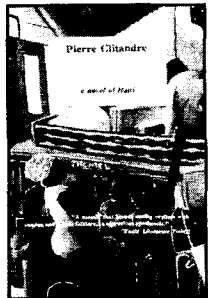
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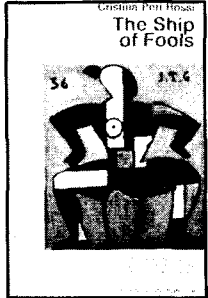
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Kinnock's new, Continental-style Labour unravels union ties and sets out to rule

By Anthony Borden

BLACKPOOL, ENGLAND

ABAN ON CIGARETTES CLEARED THE SMOKE from the ornate Winter Palace here, where at its annual conference 45 years ago the Labour Party hashed out the foundations of the British welfare state.

An apparent ban on dissent at this year's gathering cleared much of the famous raucousness from the hall as well. No one likes to say that monetarism is sweeping out the Keynesian economics of the welfare state. But in his drive to unseat the Tories, Labour leader Neil Kinnock has cleared away party history, organization and principles—and the only "big idea" that seems to remain is his determination to rule.

"We are fit, and ready not just to win but to govern," declared Kinnock in his keynote address October 2. If there is an emerging big idea, it is Labour's newfound Europeanism, with a particular affinity for the late-period Mitterrand. While carefully avoiding the urgent but difficult question of European monetary and political union, Kinnock cited Continental social-democratic models for the economy, transportation, party policy-making, and—for what he hopes to make his key campaign issue—education and vocational training reform.

U.S. Embassy Labor Counselor Lester Slezak dozed peacefully in the palace balcony, and several party members on the floor later admitted Kinnock's was a rambling and uninspired performance. Yet underlining his determination to reach Downing Street, when Kinnock closed, delegates leapt into a stomping, 10-minute ovation, inspiring an encore. It was a cheer more for power than for ideology—the primary theme at what will likely be the last party meeting before the general election expected next summer.

Eau de socialisme: Kinnock's French socialism seemed a defensive and somewhat odd theme for a conference titled "Looking to the Future." In particular, he cited Paris to justify nearly every promise of public spending, including high-speed trains—a clear signal of the demise of Labour's distinctive union-based socialism.

The party is unraveling its ties with the union movement, and particularly with the vibrant grass-roots activism of the constituent parties, always a left gadfly. The new Labour is instead a leadership-run party of rolling policy reviews. It talks of social cohesion and, disturbingly, a new world order. Domestically the focus is on cooperative management between government, capital, and labor—negotiations to be driven top-down by experts, not by social forces. At the conference, few seemed to take notice of the lone speaker who called for increased public ownership.

The sole emotional moment in Kinnock's speech concerned education reform, a fair issue for a centrist campaign. Such a platform allows him to mix talk of "liberating" the less fortunate with visions of making Britain's hobbled industry competitive and even of generating wealth. Indeed, the call should resonate in a country where the system—which shuttles all the lowest-scoring teenagers into a patchy vocational track—guarantees an enormous waste of human po-

tential. As a result, the country has far fewer teenagers in full-time training or education than all its European Community (EC) rivals but Greece. Labour promises a major improvement in the vocational track (though not its abolishment), as well as in adult education and retraining programs, which, despite Britain's massive de-industrialization, have been negligible.

The conference also overwhelmingly committed the party to a leadership quota insuring that 40 percent of all positions are filled by women—though the parliamentary level gets 10 years to reach the mark. A national minimum wage was promised by Tony Blair, member of parliament and shadow employment secretary (that is, a member of Kinnock's Cabinet in waiting). Britain and Ireland are the only EC states without a minimum wage law. According to the Low Pay Unit, an independent London-based research group, there are up to 10 million workers, primarily women in homework and part-time jobs, who earn below the Council of Europe's decency threshold.

Of course, the party has also pledged to abolish the poll tax, the hated flat local levy, and to shore up the National Health Service, the last bastion of post-war Labourism that the Tories hope to dismantle.

But like the U.S. Democrats, Labour has firmly staked its main battlefield on enemy turf. Kinnock and shadow chancellor John Smith promise a conservative, if enlightened, fiscal policy. "We will not spend more than we can afford," Smith said repeatedly. Instead, the two are angling to win on competence. Balance of payments, unemployment and inflation—a key Tory issue in the late '70s—have all worsened since the Conservatives first took power. Kinnock urged credit controls, a cut in the 15-percent interest rate, and membership in the EC's Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM) to fight the current 10.6 percent inflation.

The vulnerability of this cautious strategy was made apparent on the final day of the conference, when Tory Chancellor John Major suddenly enacted the last two of Kinnock's three initiatives. While submitting to the discipline of ERM, which ties the pound to the deutschemark—a significant shift in Britain's relationship to the Continent—is likely to increase unemployment in a year, opinion polls that weekend still gave Labour a commanding lead in the upper teens. But Major's move, while stealing Labour's show, should bring on a short-term economic boom—pleasing mortgage holders in particular—and is essentially a starting gun on the campaign.

Manufacturing consent: Underlying the great kitsch of Blackpool, one of the most popular vacation spots in Britain, is pure hideousness and a parody of false cheer. The streets are lined with illuminated signs for garish rock-candy shops, video-game parlors, fish and chippies and bed and breakfasts. Along the extended promenade, huge lights shaped like stars, flowers and teapots blink overhead. Each has an enormous smiling face—some even wink.

On at least one level, the facade was a disturbing parallel to the shaky confidence on display in the palace. Blackpool marked the culmination of the one campaign Kin-

nock has decisively won: that against his own left wing. Trotskyists have already been expelled and their newspapers banned from party functions. Three weeks ago the central office shut down the Brighton Labour Party after it crossed party policy to advocate non-payment of the poll tax. Nevertheless, the striking feature at the conference was the political spunk that still lingers within the party and the fierce, anti-democratic means Kinnock is willing to employ to get his way.

Most resolutions were geared toward the party's ongoing policy review, received extravagant introductions by the relevant shadow ministers and were passed with a show of hands. But half a dozen measures—including electoral reform, mandatory reselection of members of Parliament (MPs) and pension raises—were passed over the leadership's strong objection. Then they were simply ignored.

This year's key battle was over defense policy. Kinnock, a former unilateralist, largely blames that policy for the party's 1987 defeat. Now, despite events in Eastern Europe and Labour's heavy reliance on a peace dividend, he advocates an unspecified and negotiated arms reduction and full loyalty to the Atlantic alliance. The opposing motion, which had already been approved by last year's conference, called for military spending to be reduced to a European average.

Kinnock overcame an exceptional revolt among his allies when his motion passed in the National Executive Committee (NEC) by a mere 14-to-13 margin. "I wish we weren't

In his drive to win, Kinnock has cleared away party history and principles.

arguing about the finer points of how to persuade the nation that we really are committed to their security," said dissident NEC member David Blunkett during a lively Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) fringe meeting held to defuse the dispute. "I wish we were more secure in ourselves ... because we have the kind of bonanza which will enable a Labour government to carry out its social, economic, education and transport policies."

Paul Rogers of the University of Bradford Department of Peace Studies asserted that defense cuts of up to 30 percent could be justified over 10 years, bringing in 100 billion pounds (\$200 billion)—roughly the entire proceeds of North Sea oil. Shadow defense secretary Martin O'Neill offered no compromise, however. He dismissed the CND-backed motion as vague, and spoke strangely of the need to verify arms reductions by the "Warsaw Pact" countries.

As expected, unions—which hold 70 percent of the conference vote—and party activists overwhelmingly rejected Kinnock's position. Amid the celebration, however, MP and conference chair Jo Richardson declined to call a paper ballot for the hand vote, eliminating the chance to certify the two-thirds majority needed to force the resolution onto the campaign manifesto. Calling

the resolution "a wish list that nobody can really dislike but nobody can deliver," Kinnock publicly lambasted the dissenting members of the NEC for not displaying the unity required to govern.

The greatest tension arose, however, during a debate over the crisis in the Gulf. While the official motion backed U.S. and UK policy, an emergency resolution from a local party sought to bar any military action without explicit U.N. approval.

Party eminence and former Chancellor Denis Healey (known derisively as the right honorable member for NATO) threw his substantial girth behind the NEC position, proceeding to confuse the issue with a vintage

BRITAIN

performance about the importance of creating a new world order. In what would have been a natural counterattack, senior MP Tony Benn, an eloquent anti-war voice since the Gulf crisis began, stood up to support the emergency measure—a moment that offered rare gravity to the deliberations. Benn's traumatic loss to Healey in the 1981 deputy leadership battle marked the end of the left's brief hold over the party and ushered in the present revisionism. But Chairwoman Richardson, herself a former Bennite, refused to call on or even acknowledge him, though he was just a few feet away. Shouts of "Let him speak" echoed to no avail, and the emergency measure fell.

Imagine there's no Maggie: A Labour victory and a Labour defeat seem equally unthinkable. Five more years of Thatcherism would be crushing for both the country and the opposition party, especially after such a painful rebirth. But its 140-seat deficit in Parliament, including several strategically redrawn constituencies, make Labour's challenge formidable, particularly with such a damp squib for a leader. Should it lose, predictions range from the ascendancy of shadow chancellor Smith to the re-emergence of the left to a cataclysmic internal battle and the collapse of the broad labor coalition.

Of more immediate interest may be what will happen if the party wins—if, for no other reason, to learn what its policies, at long last, actually are. But also of interest will be the vibrancy of debate now key for any left party. Astonishing at Blackpool was how readily even the staunchest Kinnockites admitted to the primacy of public relations. To win, they assert, differences don't need to be resolved, just muffled. At the CND meeting, shadow defense secretary O'Neill whined that the conservatives would never be convinced that Labour was tough on defense, even after Kinnock repudiated the CND-backed resolution. "They will use their publicity machine to denigrate our policies," he complained. "They will do it anyway," replied a heckler.

Will the first post-victory conference see, as many party members hope, the blooming of a hundred flowers? Believing that the party cannot re-establish credibility in a single term, some argue that the outburst must be postponed until after the second, post-victory conference. What seems most likely, however, is that Kinnock will take victory as a vindication of his move toward a professional-class, Continental-style party. The fabled sovereignty of conference will continue to erode, and with it the influence of both the unions and the grass roots. □

Anthony Borden is a freelance writer living in London.

IN THESE TIMES OCT. 17-23, 1990 11

By S.A. Paolantonio

PHILADELPHIA

ON THIS SUNDAY EVENING IN WEST Philadelphia, Mayor W. Wilson Goode has *that look* on his face again. His lips are tight, his eyes buried deeply under a pensive brow. He is trapped.

The city's fiscal crisis is about to slam the last possible door of opportunity on his struggle for political redemption. His seven years in office have been the story of a man who has tried to build A Legacy but has been met at every turn by mistakes, missed opportunities and misfortune.

One break at the end of his tenure in office as the city's first black mayor and Goode, upon retirement, could articulate that Legacy and put it to use in the city's boardrooms and editorial boards. He could talk about the new skyline, for example. With some over-indulgent Center City developers, he could take credit for the new office towers downtown—Mayor Goode's Skyline!

But recession has sullied the shine of those new buildings. Developers are filing for bankruptcy. By year's end, analysts predict, nearly a quarter of the office space in Center City will be vacant.

Trapped.

He needed a few breaks, too, with his 1990-91 budget, an election-year budget that, if played right, would help one of his chief allies, City Councilman Lucien E. Blackwell, succeed him in the mayor's chair. He needed help from the state. He needed a strong economy. He wanted the city council to approve new taxes.

He was asking a lot, but that has been the hallmark of his tenure as mayor. Goode asks but never demands, never pushes, never slams the backroom door and cuts a deal. He also never screams and cajoles and threatens. In other words, Goode is not an arm-twister. He never thought he would have to twist any. He was the first black mayor of Philadelphia. He would have A Legacy.

But the council, running for re-election in 1991, would hear nothing about new taxes earlier this year. And state government said, drop dead, no bailouts for Philadelphia, especially when Pennsylvania Gov. Bob Casey and most of the state legislature are up for re-election in November.

So Philadelphia got a bad budget—investors got jittery. Tax receipts lagged with the economy. Moody's and Standard & Poor's gave the city junk-bond credit ratings like lollipops at a bank teller's window. And in September, when the mayor tried to borrow \$375 million to keep the city going through next spring—a little seasonal borrowing, not even a big number—the banks said no.

Trapped.

No matter what, Goode thought he could still go to the churches and the black clergy would resurrect his image as the embodiment of a 25-year struggle to overthrow white rule, to erase the racial hatred of Frank L. Rizzo's eight years as mayor and launch a new era of reform politics in Philadelphia. In 1983, blacks brought their contributions to Goode in jars, pennies and dimes and nickels that had been saved in kitchen cabinets in Germantown and dresser drawers in West Oak Lane. More than 55 percent of the \$2 million Goode raised when he first ran for mayor came from 25,000 individual

Myra Ludwig, Philadelphia Inquirer



Philadelphia's Mayor Wilson Goode: looking for another chance at political redemption in a city on the brink.

contributors, unprecedented in the city's political history. He was their mayor, and no matter what he did, Goode could always come back to them and find a way out of one political predicament or another.

Even after the MOVE debacle. At 5:27 p.m., May 13, 1985, he authorized the city's police department to drop a bomb on a West Philadelphia rowhouse where the radical group MOVE had been harassing a neighborhood for decades. The fire department let the bunker burn, and in the end 11 people died, including five children. Sixty-one homes in the working-class neighborhood of Osage Avenue were ashes. The contractor chosen by Goode to rebuild the neighborhood was later convicted of defrauding the city out of hundreds of thousands of dollars in overpayments and kickbacks on the construction of the new homes. Even after that catastrophe, the MOVE Commission report that was highly critical of the mayor and the grand jury that came within a whisper of indicting everyone involved, Goode was able to return to the churches, beat his supporters into a frenzy and hold onto The Legacy for one more term.

He was re-elected in 1987, but he could beat Rizzo—the other most-hated man in Philadelphia politics—only by a mere 17,000 votes. Rizzo, they all said before, during and after the election, was the only challenger Goode could beat.

The last hurrah: So he's looking for another chance for redemption—maybe his last. But something is wrong. Goode's in the picture, but he's not the real reason everybody is there. By law, he cannot serve a third term. They are not there to save the mayor.

"Goode's problem is that he's never really understood his true place in the history of black politics of Philadelphia," says J. Whyatt Mondesire, the top Philadelphia aide to U.S. Rep. William Gray 3d, the North Philadelphia congressman who is the third-highest-ranking member in the House. "He still thinks the black movement in this city is about him. It

never was."

Oh sure, they came to Vine Memorial Baptist Church in West Philadelphia this last Sunday night in September, in the rain, 10 months before they must choose a new mayor, to praise Goode. But they are really there to save The Legacy, and the contracts, jobs and patronage that he has funneled to the minority community to make up for years of being shut out.

In exchange for a legislative package that would help Philadelphia get back into the financial markets to borrow money and reduce its deficit, legislators in Harrisburg, particularly Republicans, want state oversight of the city's budget policies—a financial control board similar to the one created in New York City in the late '70s to stave off bankruptcy. But that would mean that the only way to save The Legacy would be to lose control of it.

It took 25 years for blacks to get their fair share. Nobody is going to get in the way of that. Not even Wilson Goode. And, although he won't admit it, the mayor has that look on his face again.

Still, it's a profoundly unlikely place for him to look this way, since he is among perhaps 400 of his closest supporters and friends, and no fewer than a dozen black ministers have just told the TV cameras, the reporters—the white members of the city's media—that no, the mayor is not at fault here.

The city will run out of cash in seven weeks. Wall Street has lost patience. The state legislature is laughing at Philadelphia. To hoard cash, the city has cut services to only the essential. But it's not Goode's fault. They repeat it over and over, hearing the wild cackles and cheers of the audience, the choir's thumping approval and the organist's edgy, swooning testimonial to the city's first black mayor. Blame the federal government. Blame the state legislature in Harrisburg. Blame the media.

"I don't know why we are here blaming

the mayor, when it's not the mayor's budget," says Rev. Frank C. Cummings, bishop of Philadelphia's African Methodist Episcopal churches. "It's the city council's budget. Blame them."

So Goode, who came to Philadelphia through the South and the church, in that order, is ready to believe he has one more chance to find a way out.

The ovation is thunderous, the organ pulsating, the choir swaying back and forth, and Goode jumps from the middle aisle, second oak pew, and stands behind the podium with his wife, Velma, her face expressionless, her husband among friends.

It's a short speech with an I-told-you-so tone. Goode says that he has been saying since 1988 that without a major restructuring of tax revenue, the city would eventually come up empty. He says it was never his job to force elected officials to do what's right. Then he invokes the last, best chord, villifying those who have said his supporters were there that night not because he has done a good job but because he is black.

"Everyone who is here because I'm black, leave now," Goode says, pausing to see who will take him up on it. "If you're here because you believe I've done a good job, stand on your feet now." A wild cheering ovation subsides quickly. With his wife in tow, Goode returns to the pew. The service ends, and the next day Philadelphia edges one step closer to going broke.

The high cost of living: How did Goode and his city get to the brink? First, a few facts.

During Ronald Reagan's systematic slashing of federal aid to cities, Philadelphia's share dropped dramatically. In 1978, federal funds accounted for 15 percent of Philadelphia's revenues. When Reagan left office, that figure was 3.2 percent. The cuts, adjusted for inflation, amount to about \$210 million—about the size of the current projected deficit.

Philadelphia has the highest city wage

The Philadelphia Story

tax in the nation, a whopping 4.96 percent. That means that when a business makes a choice about moving to the Philadelphia area or its suburbs, it must take into account what amounts to a 5 percent salary increase to employees to lure them to their company if it wants to locate in the city. That's why just to the north there is a new high-tech corridor in Bucks County, in a straight shot between New York and Pittsburgh, bypassing Philadelphia.

Then there is the realty transfer tax, also the highest in the nation. And auto insurance, highest in the nation. And the cost of riding in a cab, highest in the nation.

Not surprisingly, the high cost of living in Philadelphia drove people out of the city, especially the white middle class. From 1980 to the latest 1990 census estimates, Philadelphia saw a 9 percent population decline, from 1.7 million people to an estimated 1.54 million. That shrunk the tax base further.

At the same time, expenses soared. The crack cocaine epidemic quickly filtered down the Eastern seaboard from New York City. Knowing that the federal government had reneged on its responsibilities to the cities, Goode began footling the bill for the social crises that sprung from crack: homelessness, prostitution, AIDS and street crime. As a result, city spending on health, the courts and human services more than doubled in the last decade.

What happened in Philadelphia is a case study of urban America in the Reagan decade. But what has made this city unlike any other big city in the nation is the complete breakdown of any political infrastructure. As Pennsylvania House Speaker Robert W. O'Donnell says, Philadelphia has none of "the normal relationships that politicians trade on."

In short, what happened to Philadelphia was Wilson Goode. He and O'Donnell—from the same party and the same city; in fact, O'Donnell's law office is literally across the street from City Hall—go for months without speaking to one another. Goode and Casey, also from the same party, do not talk to each other, either. (For example, on September 12, the day the city failed to borrow \$375 million in short-term notes, Goode needed only a letter of support from Casey to banks telling investors that the state would back the city's bonds. Goode called Casey at 11 o'clock that morning

for help. Casey did not call back for four and a half hours. At 3:30 p.m. Casey called back with regrets. It didn't matter. Goode had already pulled the plug on the deal.)

And Goode and Gray, who is easily the most powerful and popular politician in the city, have developed a deep political rivalry. As a result, the U.S. congressional delegation did little to buoy the city budget. The national average for municipal funding from the federal government was 4.1 percent in 1989; in Philadelphia, it was 3.1 percent. The same year, the national average for municipal funding from state government was 15.9 percent; in Philadelphia, it was 13.5 percent. Philadelphia now finances 86.7 per-

jected it, believing city voters, which polls showed already in a belligerent mood, would reject it.

That split the city council along 1991 political lines. Blackwell's coalition had the nine votes necessary on the 17-member panel to thwart any tax increase. And Goode was powerless to change any votes. In seven years in office, he had never tried that strategy. So even if he attempted to twist arms this time, nobody would have taken him seriously. The budget the council passed, the one Goode allowed to become law, was at least \$200 million out of whack.

A *Philadelphia Daily News* editorial, May 29, 1990, read: "Council may be sticking it to the mayor, but he gave the council choices they didn't like and had little motivation to swallow. Legislative bodies aren't built to lead. They compromise. Mayors, governors and presidents are supposed to set priorities and get things done. That's how we've ended up with a non-budget budget, perhaps the best one that's politically possible, but one that can't work."

The bogus budget had lots of holes. The state legislature was expected to approve a 1 percent increase in the city's sales tax. It never happened. There was no source of funding for a \$45 million mandated contribution to the region's mass-transit system, SEPTA. There was no source for new contracts for the police and fire departments; an arbitrator granted both new 5 percent pay hikes last month. The courts ruled that the realty transfer tax was excessive, a ruling the city knew was coming down. Cost: \$25 million. The council was supposed to make \$65 million in cuts. It never did.

The bill came due in the summer, as the recession grabbed the ankles of the Northeast's economy and began pulling slowly downward. The builders and developers, low on cash, made payment of city taxes a low priority. Philadelphia already has a tax collection rate of only 92 percent; municipal finance experts say anything below 95 percent is unworkable.

In July, Goode admitted the budget was dead—the city would have to borrow to get through the fiscal year. But the credit rating had already been lowered, and, as the city would quickly find out, no bank would guarantee the city's note sale. Swiss Bank Inc. would back only \$50 million of the original \$400 million the city wanted to raise on Wall Street.

The banks were scared off by City Controller Jonathan A. Sidel, who would not approve the note sale, saying it was foolish to load the city with any more massive debt when what the city needed was an overhaul of how it raises and spends money.

Sidel, allied with one of the city's most powerful white Democrats, state Sen. Vincent J. Fumo of South Philadelphia, was working behind the scenes and in the press to undermine the deal. Up to this point, most of the city's political paralysis had been limited to the small circle of Philadelphia. Then, on September 11, the *New York Times* published a front-page story detailing the depth of Philadelphia's political divisions. The next morning, when the city tried to sell the bonds, Swiss Bank pulled out of the deal and Goode, unable to get Casey's help, pulled the plug.

The mayor's powerlessness took on so many clients: the chairmen of local banks; the governor; the state legislature; the city controller; his allies on the city council; even his own finance director, Betsy C. Reveal, who continued to show a streak of independent criticism of Philadelphia's political breakdown and forecast fiscal catastrophe—a kind of budgetary brinkmanship to scare people into action—even while Goode was playing good cop.

It's really no mystery how all these top-level officials in the city's financial and political communities could ignore Philadelphia's chief executive. Every citywide poll in the last 18 months has shown that Goode is a mayor with an isolated constituency. In March, a Temple University poll of 1,159 city voters found that 75 percent of the white respondents disapproved of Goode's performance and 61 percent of the Latinos disapproved. His approval rating among black respondents remained at 65 percent. But even the black leaders on the city council, especially Blackwell, chose to ignore those numbers.

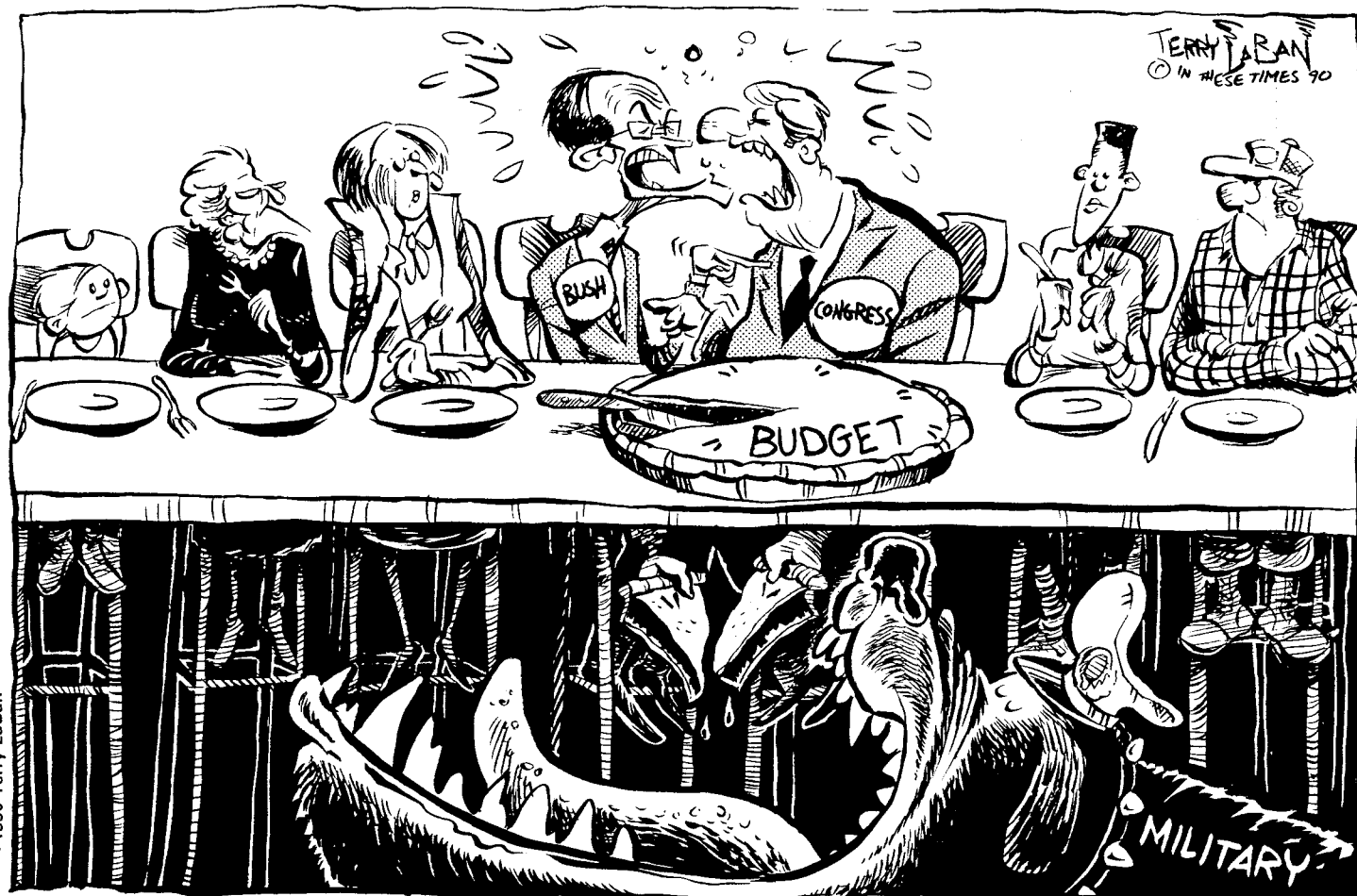
Blackwell had his own agenda, contending that the tax increases Goode wanted were too politically unpalatable. The underclass, particularly the elderly who form the core of his West Philadelphia base, cannot handle a wage tax increase, especially while they have watched the Goode administration dole out tax abatements to downtown developers. At the first post-summer council session in September, Blackwell took the floor for 55 minutes, delivering a scathing attack on the city's "money lenders," making a direct, emotional appeal to the city's underclass and subtly outlining the class and racial differences that were a consistent subtext to the city's failed note sale.

But it's a huge political risk for Blackwell. He has embraced and supported Goode; Blackwell wants his endorsement in the 1991 primary because Goode can deliver black votes, as the polls show. But, in the process, Blackwell has bet the house that the city's finances will not collapse with the bogus budget he helped engineer in May. If the city runs out of money as predicted on December 1, both options are unpalatable to any media consultant running the Blackwell campaign for mayor. Option one: the city declares bankruptcy. Option two: the state imposes a financial control board to oversee city finances.

Continued on page 22

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EDITORIAL



The budget shell game moves to Capitol Hill

Two weeks ago, a jury of working people in Cincinnati acquitted the city's Contemporary Arts Center and its director of obscenity charges for exhibiting Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs. This happened just a few days after the American people convicted George Bush and Democratic congressional leaders of concocting something truly obscene—a budget that punished the needy and rewarded the greedy. Which goes to show that the American people are not as dumb as some people think they are.

Overwhelmed by an avalanche of protest from left and right, the administration and the congressional leaders were handed a stinging defeat. Facing angry and disgusted voters, and with elections only five weeks away, a large majority of the House unceremoniously voted down their leaders' backroom deal with the president. It was a rare display of popular power and a victory for the forces of democracy. Or was it?

Well, no. After days of mutual recriminations and jockeying for political advantage, the leaders of both parties in the Senate and House came up with something "new." It's called "an agreement in principle," but the principles underlying the new agreement are the same as those in the rejected one. In short, the new plan is simply an attempt to make the most objectionable parts of the first plan more palatable. Some changes have been made—or promised. Cuts in Medicare fees may be reduced. The tax on home heating oil may be dropped. The extension to two weeks of the one-week waiting period for unemployment benefits may be rescinded. And there may be an increase in income tax rates for the wealthiest Americans in exchange for a reduced tax rate on capital gains. But even if these adjustments are made by the various committees that will now write the final bill, it's only tinkering. The basic outlines will remain the same because the obstacle to real change has become sacrosanct.

That obstacle, of course, is military spending. In the rejected budget deal the Pentagon was given \$297 billion for 1991, not including the \$15 billion that our Iraq adventure may cost. That was \$14 billion more than the House had appropriated for the military in its August budget bill. The House figure (\$283 billion) would have translated into a saving of some \$60 billion over five years, which just

happens to be the amount Medicare was to be cut in the rejected deal, and \$18 billion more than the Medicare cuts now being talked about.

With all the talk about fairness and the critical need to reduce budget deficits, and eventually the national debt, a deathly silence greets any proposals to cut back on the military. This, in turn, means we face a zero-sum situation in which we are told everybody must sacrifice, and in which every group's gain is another's loss. And it also means that when deals are cut away from the public's view, the wealthy and the military contractors—the sponsors and buddies of the president and the congressional leadership—are the gainers and everyone else the losers.

The international connection: All of this takes place in an international context that is crippling us at home and isolating us abroad. The administration and most of the congressional leadership clearly believe that it is in the interest of the United States to continue playing world policeman. As Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Colin Powell reportedly said, "We have to put a shingle outside our door saying 'Superpower Lives Here,' no matter what the Soviets do." But as we've frequently argued, they are dead wrong. Ultimately, playing world policeman is self-defeating abroad and too costly at home.

To George Bush, politics is taking care of friends

You may be wondering just why George Bush has tried so hard to get a capital-gains tax cut. Some figures on the capital-gains income of his classmates may explain why. In 1980, the richest 1 percent of American households had an average income from all sources of \$313,206. That will increase 75 percent to \$548,969 this year, according to the Washington-based Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Of the \$313,206 income in 1980, the average household received \$83,000 in capital gains. But in 1990, average capital gains for this group are projected at more than \$175,000—double the 1980 amount. Some people argue that a capital-gains tax cut will help everyone. But while capital gains will account for 32 percent of the income of the richest 1 percent of households in 1990, it will account for only 1 percent of the income of the bottom 90 percent.

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LETTERS

The name of the game

I SHOULD LIKE TO OFFER A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT perspective from the one offered in your scholarly and highly informative "Overkill" (ITT, Aug. 29).

It boils down to one thing: M-O-N-E-Y, maximization of profits, the first law of capitalism. When a famous American bank robber was asked why he always robbed banks, he answered, very matter-of-factly, "Because that's where the money is."

In politics this same idea boils down to picking the pockets of the poor man and giving it to the rich man—a sort of reverse Robin Hood. This is accomplished by selling him armaments which he so desperately doesn't need; ripping him off on his indispensable need for many of the products of transnational-monopoly capitalism, but most especially oil; and stealing it right out of his bank account, such as our S&L scandal, and now our new and burgeoning bank scandal.

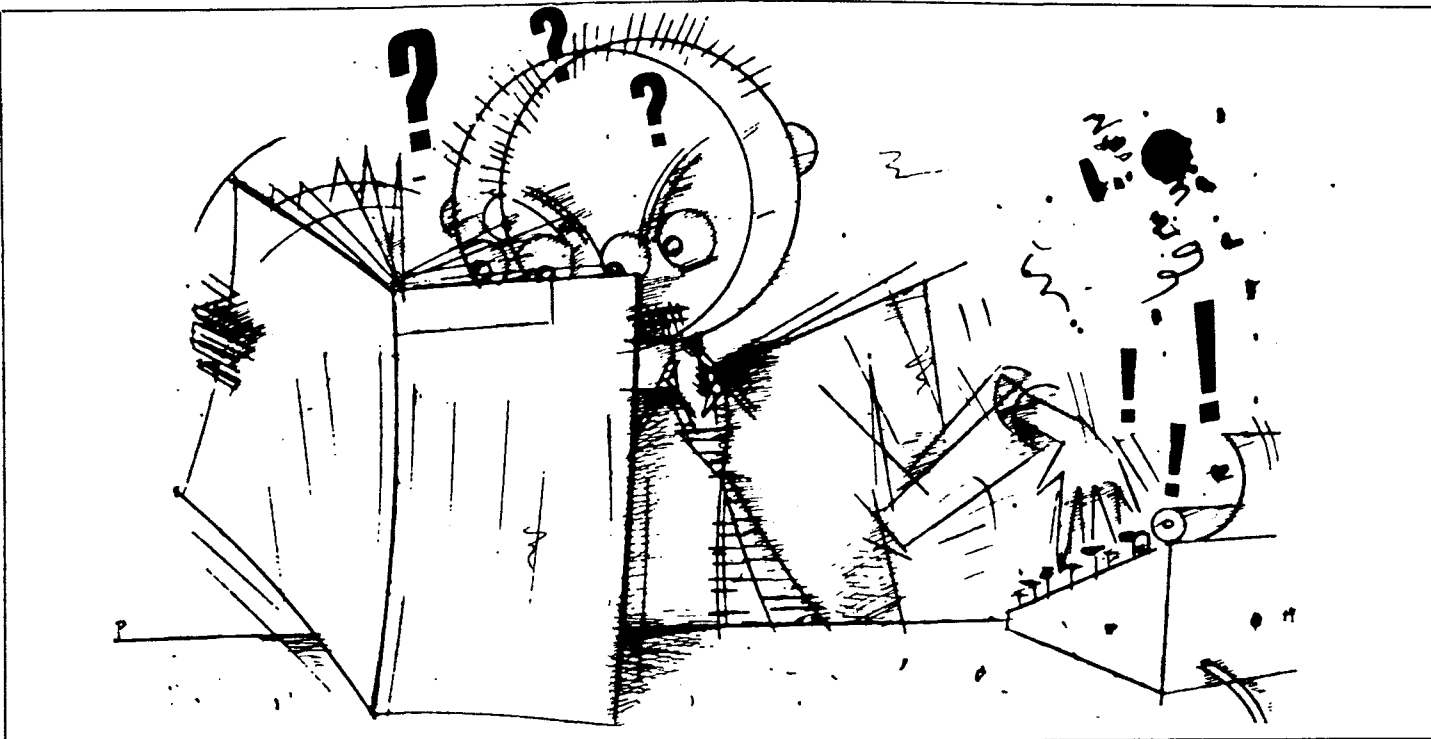
War has been useful for the armaments business, but the threat of war will do just as nicely, thank you. Witness Reagan's massive armaments buildup on the strength of the "Red Menace." But, alas, all good things must come to an end, so how to replace the "Red Menace"? One Arabic woman said on TV about a month or more ago, "Saddam Hussein must be an agent of Israel or the United States!" Personally, I don't think she was far off the mark. Because the threat of war is also useful for skyrocketing the price of oil and gas at the pump, something Hussein also desperately needed to help pay for his war with Iran, which, incidentally, he was pushed into by us to topple the Iranian revolution, and so that we could sell arms to both sides. Remember when an Iraqi missile killed 34 of our sailors? What happened? Nothing. They apologized, didn't they?

President Bush proclaimed to an anxious world that it is because of Iraq's naked aggression against Kuwait that more than 100,000 American troops and their armor are now camped out in the Saudi desert and awesome armadas of our battleships now ring the Persian Gulf. But Secretary of State James Baker, a Texas oil millionaire like his president, assured our Congress members in mid-September of a continuing military presence in the Gulf, even if Iraq pulled out of Kuwait tomorrow. Nor was Iraq's timely rapprochement with Iran in vain: "A holy war against the Great Satan" growled Iran, while also looking for windfall oil profits to mend the wounds of its eight-year war with Iraq. And Bush, himself, was moved to such a mood of fierce belligerence that he had to call on the calming influences of his old and dear friend, Mikhail Gorbachov, lest he take the fatal step that might trigger the nuclear arsenal of that irascible, Peck's Bad Boy, Israel.

And so the tangled web of intrigue grows day by day, as do the windfall profits and armaments billions, while the rip-off scandals of the perpetrators get swept under the media rug.

Is this, then, a Passion Play without end? Not really. For as the ship of state approaches the now distant shores of the 1992 elections, "exult oh shores and ring oh bells," all hail George Bush as the Prince of Peace—and the tooth fairy.

Harold Heller
Mill Valley, Calif.



The making of aggression

IN YOUR RECENT EDITORIAL (ITT, SEPT. 26), YOU contrast Hitler and Hussein, noting Germany's indigenous industrial prowess as opposed to Hussein's reliance on external support. I agree that the arms trade purposely sets the stage for lucrative trouble, but it is also true that Hitler was helped by the U.S.

Several historians have pointed out that heavy investments and transfers of technology by American corporations made the Nazi regime possible and, indeed, built it for the purpose of war. This was accomplished through a vast chemical manufacturing company, I.G. Farben, which supplied Germany with the Zyklon-B served up at the Holocaust, deadly nerve gases and even the "pesticide" Malathion, now being sprayed on populations in California to kill medflies.

Investments by Standard Oil, International Harvester and General Motors, to name only a few, boosted Farben until it became the hub of an international cartel so huge as to defy belief. Its assets in the U.S. were controlled by American I.G. Farben, a holding company whose board of directors sported such luminaries as Ford Motor Co. President Edsel Ford; Rockefeller's National City Bank President Charles E. Mitchell; Standard Oil of New York President Walter Teagle; Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Warburg; German war-effort financier Max Warburg; and Herman Metz, a director of the Bank of Manhattan, controlled by the Warburgs.

Things began in 1924, when American bankers started arranging foreign loans

through what has been called the Dawes Plan but was mostly a J.P. Morgan (GM) operation. In 1939 Standard Oil of New Jersey loaned I.G. Farben \$20 million worth of high-grade gasoline. Also in the same year, both Alcoa and Dow Chemical transferred experience and technology to Germany.

The two largest Nazi tank manufacturers were subsidiaries of U.S. corporations—General Motors and Ford.

A partial list of companies either owned by Farben or having cartel agreements with it before, during and after the war includes DuPont, Imperial Chemical Industries, Borden, Carnation, General Mills, Kellogg, Nestlé, Pet Milk, Owl Drug, Parke-Davis, Bayer, Whitehall Labs, Chef Boy-Ar-Dee, Bristol Meyers, Squibb & Sons, Colgate and Procter & Gamble.

So while there may be no comparison between Hitler and Hussein, it is important to remember that Germany did not do it on its own, either. Business transcends governments and is the true mover and shaker of politics.

Peter G. Tocci
Leominster, Mass.

Private initiative and the S&L scandal

THE SAVINGS AND LOAN SCAM WILL CONTINUE FOR many years, perpetuated by politically biased government agencies and attorneys. A few S&L officers and directors will be sued in federal court. A few many be found guilty and given some small reprimand. The lawsuit in federal court against Neil Bush and 10 other Silverado Savings and Loan officials and directors for \$200 million is only 20 percent of the \$1 billion loss to the

taxpayers in this one case. Even if the government wins, which it probably won't, the taxpayers will still pay most of the loss.

Maybe we should privatize crime-fighting, as in the Old West, and use bounty-hunters to seek out savings and loan cheaters. Billboards reading "Wanted Dead or Alive—S&L Cheaters" could attract money-hungry armed sleuths. Private professional liability attorneys could seek out and prosecute S&L swindlers on behalf of the taxpayers, on a contingency-fee basis. This would recover more of the losses and bring a sense of justice and honesty to our government.

Edward Wiederhold
La Porte, Ind.

Tunnel vision

IN HIS REVIEW OF ROBERT I. FRIEDMAN'S BOOK about Meir Kahane (ITT, Sept. 26), Daniel Lazare seemed as interested in trashing Judaism as he was in discussing the book.

If he thinks Judaism "resounds with enough violence ... to fuel a thousand Kahanes," what must he think about Islam, which explicitly calls for "holy" war against non-believers and views apostasy as a capital offense?

Lazare fails to make two essential points about Kahane:

First, as repugnant as his views are, he certainly does not endorse "genocidal policies" against the Palestinians. He calls for mere expulsion to the east side of the Jordan.

Second, though he does have some small following in Israel, he is an outcast and pariah as far as most Israelis (and American Jews) are concerned and is certainly not in the mainstream of Judaism.

David Steinberg
Mason, N.H.

SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander



By Mark A. Bruzonsky

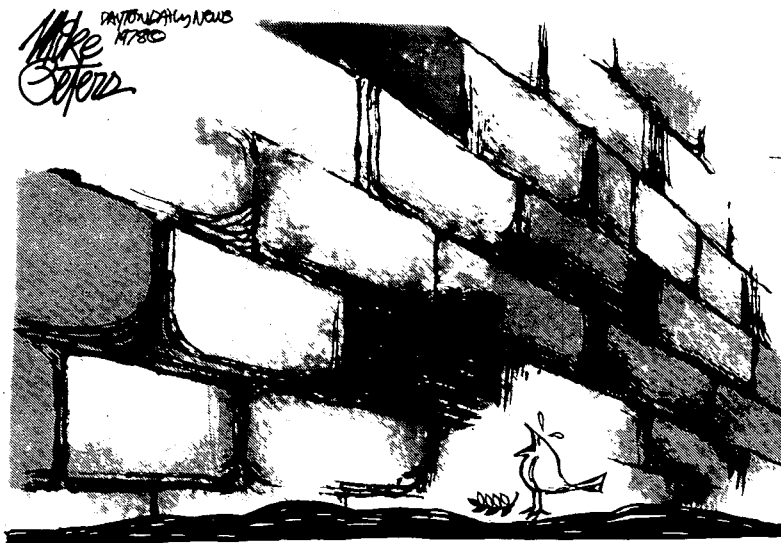
MONDAY'S UNPRECEDENTED MASSACRE OF Palestinians at the Al Aqsa Mosque in the Old City of Jerusalem—the worst daily death toll since the beginning of the occupation in June 1967—should not be thought of as an isolated incident.

Rather, the Israeli army's carnage that resulted in at least 21 deaths and hundreds of serious injuries is tragically indicative of the dangerously deteriorating relations between Jews and Palestinians in the Holy Land.

Consider this eyewitness report from an Arab-American who lives in Washington and was visiting Jerusalem on Monday morning:

"I was witness to a large group of Jews dancing in front of the Wailing Wall chanting in Hebrew and English: 'Let us in! We want to kill more! Death to the Arabs!' This was immediately following the massacre of some 21 innocent people! After leaving the [Dome of the Rock], I began to walk through the Old City to return home. On my way, a group of five or six Jewish settlers pointed toward me and shouted in Hebrew, 'Arabs!' They then fired a burst of machine-gun fire in my direction. The bullets hit the wall behind me, mere inches away from my head. I began to run when an elderly Palestinian man grabbed me by the shirt and pulled me into his home. He hid me in his bathroom and locked the door. After about five minutes the old man let me out and said that the coast was clear. I thanked him and left in shock."

Protestations cannot mask U.S. complicity with Israel



THE WAILING WALL

The U.S. is clearly complicit in these developments. By encouraging Israel's oppression of the Palestinians for so long, by continuing to look the other way as Israeli settlement of the Occupied Territories and the Arab sections of Jerusalem has escalated, by providing Israel with more and more American aid, Washington has made itself Israel's partner in all that has taken place. Occasional protestations of concern and sorrow from Washington cannot mask this complicity.

Nearly three years ago the Palestinians' frustration exploded into the intifada. Young Palestinians, who have known little else but Israeli military rule for the past 23 years, simply decided that they were going to fight for their freedom. They have done so with great courage and considerable resourcefulness.

For a variety of historical and political reasons, the U.S. has not only accepted Israel's repression of the Palestinians but has funded and nurtured it, even though, year after year, the United Nations has repeatedly condemned Israeli policies. Indeed, not a single nation has recognized either the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip or the illegality of Israel's annexation of Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

How ironic, of course, that in recent months, in a show of what many understandably consider rather blatant hypocrisy, the Bush administration is suddenly endorsing U.N. legitimacy and is ready to go to war because of Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. This double standard is obvious to most people in the Mideast. Resentment about it will cause a horrendous explosion of emotions and hatreds if Bush goes through with an assault against Iraq.

Monday's massacre was prefaced by considerable Israeli taunting of the Palestinians. The immediate provocation was the plan by Israeli zealots, with covert support from some members of the current Israeli government, to rebuild the Jewish Temple of biblical days on the current site of one of Islam's holiest shrines.

But this is only one incident in a three-year pattern of pogroms, killings, house demolitions and occasional massacres. In Palestinian towns, cities and refugee camps—with names such as Nablus, Za'atra, Nahalin, Deheisha and Beit Sahur—monuments to such past crimes are evident.

Each time, the Israelis have made up various excuses to deflect world public opinion. And occasionally, when the pressure became too great, there have been commissions of inquiry leading to the slapping of a few army or border police officials' wrists for using "excessive force."

Crisis beneficiaries: In recent days, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir and Foreign Minister David Levy have gloated about the increase of American aid because of the Persian Gulf crisis, as well as the new com-

mitment of another \$400 million in U.S. funds for settlement of more tens of thousands of Soviet Jews throughout Israel.

Just a few days ago, thumbing his nose at both the Palestinians and Washington, Shamir announced a new Jewish development area within the boundaries of Arab East Jerusalem—even though, supposedly, Israel had guaranteed Washington that the American funds were not to be used beyond the old 1967 boundaries, the so-called "Green Line."

There will be much said in coming days attempting to justify Israel's actions. And there are likely to be future explosions of Palestinian outrage and further Israeli brutality. But consider this simple question: how would Israel react, and how would the world react, if dozens of Syrian Jews were shot dead on the streets of Damascus, hundreds injured, and ambulances were prevented from coming to get the wounded?

It's time to come to grips with the basic issue. Both the Israelis and the Palestinians have their own very different but no less legitimate national movements—and the U.S. should be supporting both, rather than simply siding with Israel. This has become all the more true now that U.S. forces are again involved in the Middle East and might soon be taking sides in an Arab civil war.

With Washington now having taken such a powerful position against occupation and in favor of U.N. legitimacy, the opportunity is at hand to force the Bush administration to apply consistent principles and standards to our involvement in an increasingly volatile Middle East.

The idea of an international peace conference to resolve Middle East problems that have their roots in the colonial period and steps taken by both the League of Nations and the United Nations did not originate with Saddam Hussein. It is the longstanding United Nations position and was the U.S. position at the end of the October War in 1973 and again in 1977 when both Washington and Moscow issued a joint statement calling for such a development.

It's not too late for Washington to decide that diplomacy is less risky than war, that the Palestinians, no less than the Kuwaitis—or the Israelis, for that matter—are entitled to their own self-determination, and that the U.S. should finally stand for justice and democracy rather than short-term self-interest.

Palestinian leaders in Jerusalem have issued an urgent impassioned statement: "We repeat our earlier plea for international intervention. We do not understand how oil in the Gulf can be valued more highly than Palestinian blood and Moslem rights and shrines. We do not understand how the Security Council can ignore our plea for protection when it is prepared to send troops to fight in a war in the Gulf region."

"Once again, we issue a plea to the civilized world: come to our protection before it is too late. Put an end to this process of annihilation. Protect us against Israeli soldiers, settlers and armed religious zealots."

These pleas should no longer be ignored.

Mark A. Bruzonsky is former Washington representative of the World Jewish Congress and chairman of the Jewish Committee on the Middle East, an organization of American Jews, including professors at more than 140 universities.

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Popular fury and the smash-and-grab hole

Amid the rubble of the failed budget deal, Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell declared Monday night, "Tonight we reap the bitter harvest of ten years of national self-indulgence." Other accomplices in the package rejected by the House of Representatives redoubled their calls for the "necessary sacrifice" by the American people.

The people said hokey, and the people were right. There's been no national self-indulgence over the last ten years. There's been the self-indulgence of a class—call it the rich, or, in the term of the old populists, "the money power"—which launched a successful smash-and-grab raid on the treasury over a decade ago. The failed package required not national but selective sacrifice, from which the rich have been exempt.

As the Democratic leaders capitulated in the final days of the secret budget negotiations, the package tilted in a savagely regressive direction: not just the hike in Medicare premiums and deductibility and in consumption taxes but—this in the onset of a recession!—such cruelties as a requirement that laid-off workers would have to wait two weeks before collecting unemployment, plus a reduction in the amount of money to be invested in a tax credit for the working poor. Meanwhile there were new tax dodges for the rich and special perks for the very, very rich.

The majestic contours of the smash and grab are easy to get into sharp focus. Between 1977 and 1990 (no need to blame it all on Reagan, Bush and the Republicans) the income of the richest fifth of the population rose by 33.2 percent and the top one percent by 95.1 percent, while the total income of the bottom 60 percent fell.

Between 1979 and 1989 capital income (from rents, dividends and interest) rose by 66.2 percent. Labor income, in the form of hourly wages, fell by more than 9 percent. Pensions, health insurance and paid time off dropped by 13.8 percent.

Compensation fell most among blue-collar and service workers, young workers and workers without college education.

One more set of figures from the findings of Mishel and Frankel's *State of Working America*, recently published by the Economic Policy Institute: the average American CEO earned a pre-tax \$308,200 in 1979 and a pre-tax of \$612,800 in 1989. The post-tax figure for 1979 was \$153,900 and in 1989, \$429,100.

Such, in statistical form, is the political culture that in bipartisan conspiracy shaped the budget package finally rejected by legislators cowering under the abuse of their constituents.

Such are some of the ingredients of the popular fury that handed the neo-Nazi David Duke his surprisingly large though losing vote in Louisiana and, more significantly, the equally virulent racist John Silber his stunning victory in the Democratic gubernatorial primary in Massachusetts.

Angry people will strike out with such weapons as are available to them, and effective weapons are hard to come by in a country under one-party rule run in the interests of the rich and the corporate. One such weapon, tested already in Oklahoma and scheduled for a vote in California on the November ballot, is term limits for elected officials and politicians. Throw the rascals

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn



out. It's pretty clear that Pete Schabarum's Prop 140, with its shotgun single-term limit, would land the state even more deeply in the arms of the lobbyists and corporate interests in which it already reposes.

Prop 131, the liberal alternative, has more appeal. Limited merely to two four-year consecutive terms, legislators wouldn't, as with Prop 140, just be a bunch of chickens led around by seasoned lobbyist foxes. With 3-to-1 public matching money for donations of under \$100 raised from someone living within the district, it would give the little guy a bit more clout against the out-of-district corporate donors.

So Prop 131 could be a more powerful, constructive weapon for angry people who've had it with the "special interests," otherwise known as the standard operating procedures of the system. But what would all those prospective new legislators, some of them presumably burning with zeal to reform a corrupted system, actually do? It's the same question one can ask about Prop 128, the environmental initiative known as "Big Green." Suppose it wins, which hope-

fully it will, then where is the mass movement to ensure that its admirable provisions don't get beached in protracted court fights, to sustain its challenge to present

economic and political assumptions about what costs and benefits should be?

You can't make any substantive political change without a political movement and, in the end, without a political organization. In Canada the social-democratic New Democratic Party (NDP) is the alternative to the Liberals and Conservatives. At the start of September, angry voters in Ontario, Canada's industrial heartland, kicked out the ruling Liberals and, in a staggering upset, handed power to the NDP and its leader, Bob Rae, who campaigned with the forthright declaration that he was a socialist. There's no NDP here, but if people are not to turn in desperation to the hatemongers such as Silber or Duke, the '90s will have to see the forging of populist-radical grass-roots coalitions, without whose collective purpose and sanction the consequences of term limits will be nothing but bipartisan business as usual, as symbolized by the budget package in Washington.

Just about a hundred years ago, in 1892, Ignatius Donnelly sat down to write the platform for the Populist Party. "The conditions," wrote Donnelly, "which surround us best justify our cooperation; we meet in the midst of a nation brought to the verge of moral, political and material ruin. Corruption dominates the ballot box, the legislatures, the Congress, and touches even the ermine of the bench. The people are demoralized. ... The newspapers are largely subsidized or muzzled, public opinion silenced, business prostrated, homes covered with mortgages, labor impoverished, and the land concentrating in the hands of capitalists. ... The fruits of the labor of millions are boldly stolen to build up colossal fortunes for a few, unprecedented in the history of mankind; and the possessors of those, in turn, despise the Republic and endanger liberty. From the same prolific womb of government injustice we breed the two great classes—tramps and millionaires."

It was already too late for the Populist challenge, for the Knights of Labor, with whom the Populists could have joined, had been crushed in the 1880s. By 1896 the Populists had grouped behind the Democrats' nominee, William Jennings Bryan, who was then beaten by McKinley. The corporate state was duly ushered in. Nothing much in what Donnelly wrote would need to be changed today. Nor has anything emerged to challenge the fundamentals of the political landscape. There is fury, and a vacuum waiting to be filled. ■

Distributed by Alexander Cockburn

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LEFT BUSINESS OBSERVER

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By Larry Evans

If the people don't wanna come out to the park, nobody's gonna stop them.
—Yogi Berra

MY FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH a moral dilemma occurred when I was a fifth-grade, bubble-gum-chawin' barbarian in northeast Baltimore. My mother, a devout German Catholic whom I affectionately tagged "the War Department," saw in me nothing that a nice bath in a cleansing religious experience wouldn't straighten out.

Her first parental impulse was to steer me into sports as the sure path to constructing character, but she quickly soured on the idea upon observing the lack of "adult" influence coming from the dugouts. Those Little League trenches had reduced that ennobling Grantland Rice adage—"a boy would always rather steal second base than an automobile"—to a modern creed of "go in with your spikes high and, if you lose, slash their tires."

The next spring, Mom announced that the pastor had drafted me to be an altar boy. There I was, stewed in the great institutional melting pot of church and sport.

Sport and the masses: My first Mass was opening-day Sunday. I was fit to be tied for two reasons: it was "high" Mass—fluffed with more time-consuming rituals than a rosary has Hail Marys and it was a noon-day event and my game was at one.

As I piously led the pastor out to the sacristy to open the service, he suddenly seized my elbow and pointed disapprovingly at the six unlit "high" candles. I could feel my mother's mortification 12 pews deep.

So, while choir sang and the pastor proceeded with his holy duties, red-faced rookie altar boy strained with a swaggering eight-foot wick-pole to set ablaze those six candles. The congregation's amusement routed the solemnity of the ceremony. Murmurs rose steadily to outright belly laughs. You see, as I went hell-bent from candle to candle, my outstretched arms uplifted my cassock to reveal splendid yellow-and-red-striped baseball socks. I had figured wearing my uniform under the sacred garments would get me to my game by the bottom of the second inning.

All sins were, of course, forgiven, and I miraculously became an ace altar boy—eventually getting so absorbed in "the faith" that I briefly considered the seminary. But as is the problem with all new believers, there are also new devils to be confronted. After hearing nuns' tales of demons possessing good kids and throwing them out of bed in the middle of the night (as a test of their "faith"), nightmares began visiting me regularly. I had to do something to set my mind at ease, and the more dramatic the action the better.

One late night I ventured out into

Rules of the game: working in obscurity out in left field

an isolated clearing in the woods behind our house with a steak knife and an ultimatum: "OK, if you exist, Devil, come on with it!" The longer I waited the more relieved—and idiotic—I felt. There was, in fact, no absolute evil out there worth steak-knifing. Naturally, this also prompted me to reconsider my certainty of an

LABOR

Absolute Good, which made me a worthy candidate for the next eight years of a Jesuit higher education.

Working it out: I'm sharing these little vignettes from my background to warm you up to a necessary but painful discussion of a moment of truth that I most recently had to face. Losing a job.

Last May, after four months of probation, the dreaded D-day had arrived. I would no longer be a writer for one of the most highly regarded union publications in America. Though the following open airing of my side of this story will cast a cloud over personal *career* prospects in any of labor's "Marble Palaces," I'm convinced that I learned such instructive and universal lessons as to make that gamble worthwhile. And, while we know that most bosses are deservedly construed as devils incarnate, I had to admit that *my* undoing was accomplished not only by the capricious mischief of top-down tyrants but also is attributable to my own rather devilish bottom-up behavior of the past decade.

In 1979, as a Pittsburgh steelworker, I began publishing a rowdy alternative journal called *The Mill Hunk Herald*. The *Herald* ran uncensored rank-and-file reports and opinions and tried to make sense of the sudden deindustrialization of the "Rust Belt." After steel left town, I went broke fighting on the downside of the Reagan Revolution and lived off underfunded band-aid projects (food banks and unemployed committees) and part-time trucking. And like most "dislocated" workers (an average of 1,200 migrated out of Pittsburgh each month during the ugly '80s after their unemployment checks dried up and they found themselves no longer "counted"), I left town, taking my dislocation all the way to New Jersey.

I enrolled in the Rutgers' Labor Studies Center to fulfill my ambition of becoming the ultimate oxymoron—a blue-collar scholar. I was wisely advised by a radical prof's private "disorientation" to avoid labor education's current funk by coming to class with my own activist agenda. Thus I managed to publish a ten-year anthology of the defunct *Mill Hunk*

mag and organize a trip to the Soviet Union's coalfields to co-produce a video documentary on their 1989 strike, selling myself as an educated, world-trotting labor expert with close personal ties to Hollywood. I ventured south to sell my multidisciplinary talents (some say *undisciplined* is closer to the mark) to the most progressive bidder.

My first stop was a UFCW (United Food and Commercial Workers) local in Philadelphia. After passionately presenting my ivy-laced ideas

Cowboy. Asked if I could live with this, I answered, "Couldn't someone else handle that account?" In no time I was back out on K Street pounding leather.

Laboring in the temple: Finally, I found myself at a headhunter's firm interviewing for a writer's position with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Curious as to why a union was using a *corporate* manpower service, I was clued that it had something to do with the last SEIU editor lasting only 16 days. The

While we know that most bosses are deservedly construed as devils incarnate, I had to admit that my undoing was accomplished not only by the capricious mischief of top-down tyrants but also is attributable to my own rather devilish bottom-up behavior of the past decade.

on trade-union democracy and sweeping rank-and-file reforms, the prez of the local stopped me cold with this blunt appraisal: "Lookit, Evans, you're young, intelligent and good lookin'. That means right off the bat you're gonna threaten too many people around here!"

D.C. was next. I was called in by the Kamber Group, a state-of-the-art P.R. firm that handles labor accounts (especially the building trades) and other progressive causes and has been known to do straight commercial hype as well. At first I was shocked to find that it's a common practice for international unions to "contract out" their "journalism." Would I feel comfortable, I was asked, editing the *Laborer's Union* magazine—one of Kamber's "accounts"? I offered that the Laborers (being one of the three unions under federal investigation for mob activity) might feel uneasy about my radical resume—especially the part where I had supervised a student video team at Rutgers in exploring their highly publicized fight with the Jersey City Mailhandlers, who were busy breaking away from the Laborers' "family." I surmised that I would not be able to tread the Potomac very long in concrete flippers.

Still interested in harnessing my pluck, Kamber thought maybe I could sell video. That dream soured at the viewing of one of their more recent showcase pieces on behalf of the power plant alleged responsible for polluting the Grand Canyon. I pictured myself at the OK Corral facing down Robert Redford's Rhinestone

headhunter was born in '47 like me, and for hours we shared our nostalgia like old classmates might do at their 25th reunion. My next hurdle was Dave Sheridan, SEIU's new communications director. A more open communicator I'd never met—and with a wonderfully thunderous sense of humor (yes, he'd need this to hire me). Although unsure that my free-style stream-of-consciousness editorial writing would squeeze into the necessary news-copy mold, he gave me a shot on their award-winning, full-color *Union* magazine.

Starting bright and early on Jan. 2, 1990, I began piling decades of files and ideas into my basement writer's cubicle. I pounded the phones to re-network myself with all the dizzy dissidents still out there in the field who are always thirsting for a sympathetic contact within the official AFL-CIO confines.

To properly condition myself in the early months, I "did lunch" (D.C.'s participation sport of choice) with at least three fellow Labor Temple staffers a week. Talk about conspiracy theory heaven. "Don't show your womanizin' tendencies to ____; he's part of an exclusive gay network," or "Don't mention your film on Russia to ____; he's CIA."

To top it off, everybody had to have some original "dirt" on the Mayor Barry sting—making even Louisiana politics seem squeaky clean by comparison. Through these regular indulgences in grapevined intrigue, I was getting a picture of our labor hierarchy so busy checking their "look" in the mirror that

they were forgetting to look out the window.

But I was sure that this once-humble "janitors' union," SEIU—the fastest-growing union in America—would be different. Judging from the gutsy performance of its western Pennsylvania locals, this million-member giant looked to be the union most closely in league with the future.

Unfortunately, the kinks in the armor quickly became apparent. I learned that SEIU's claim of phenomenal expansion during the '80s (when most unions suffered steep decline) was really accomplished mainly through marriages of convenience—top-down mergers with smaller fiefdoms—rather than through bottom-up organizing of new units. The Soviet Union analogy was often whispered.

This fifth-largest union in the AFL was less a tightly knit organization and more a loose federation of some 300 autonomous locals whose membership registered little identification with the SEIU umbrella. My first full briefing on the state of *Union* magazine clarified this deflating reality. A consultant's survey of the membership counted only a 23 percent unprompted recall of the very existence of the mag. That meant that for each million-member mailing, as many as 700,000 copies of this magnificently crafted publication were strong candidates for the circular file. The worse news that our new editor and I would be greeted with was that the magazine would be cut back to a quarterly. Practically relegated to brochure status. Tenuous times loomed ahead.

How "Sween" it is: For my first assignment, David Sheridan challenged me to write a health-care op-ed for the "best boss in the labor movement"—our very own cherub-faced Irishman John Sweeney. I imagined my first attempt at ghost writing as an invitation to spend precious moments getting to know the No. 1 man's nuances and inflections so that I might capture the full breadth of his commitment and personality. I pictured myself as an occasional fixture in his plush office eavesdropping on newbreaking strategies and nipping on his private liquor supply.

What an unexpected privilege and opportunity—to jot down the true Sween! What confidence they must have in my integrity and in the main man's indestructibility! I suggested to Dave that I might as well videotape John's oral history while he and I were sequestered away, pounding out the op-ed. "I'm afraid you don't get it," Dave flatly interjected. "Just write the op-ed from old speeches and news clips." There would be no audience with the Sween, no oral history. Not even a lousy memo exchange.

The other writers saw the humor in my naiveté and hastened to bring me and our new editor Susan Cal-

houn up to speed. At our first department pot-luck party to welcome Susan, fresh from a stint with *Foundation News* magazine, our spines were shivered by the tales of SEIU's frequent turnovers. To survive, one must "get it"—the buzzword for realizing that our foremost function is public relations, not journalism.

Since the union's leadership scrutinizes the *Union's* every coma, the magazine is *theirs*, not ours, and not the membership's. Stories rolled on about how one departed editor in a misguided moment of candor had acknowledged to a belly-achin' member that his mention in *Union* was "disappeared" by decree of The Leadership. He found himself instantly on the carpet. Yikes!

My next big assignment was a review of *Roger and Me*—the block-busting documentary about filmmaker Michael Moore's attempt to bring GM CEO Roger Smith face to face with the results of the plant shutdowns in Flint, Mich. I developed the angle of asking trade unionists slugging it out in the trenches to go see the show and fantasize on how they'd use Moore's camera to go after *their* bosses.

I induced a Pittston miner, an Eastern baggage-handler and several SEIU organizers to let their creative and mischievous juices flow. For evenhandedness, I put a call into the United Auto Workers (UAW) as well. Frank Joyce, a veteran from the UAW's famous Solidarity House, was on the line. "I hear you're aiding and abetting," popped Mr. Joyce. He was referring to my passing along

Michael Moore's generous offer of assistance to the rank and filers I had contacted for the story. Since I had heard through the "do lunch" grapevine that Joyce was actually a great guy with a rebel-rousing background, I went to great lengths to tell him how my contact with Moore materialized.

"One late night at the office, I got a ring from the movie mogul Mike. He suggested I come on over to his K Street office. He was wearing the same clothes that he so unfashionably modeled in the movie, and his office was an avalanche of moldy Chinese take-out containers and biodegrading pizza boxes. Over a six-pack, 'Mike and Me' waxed philosophical about the good old alternative publishing days (Mike used to edit the *Michigan Voice* and, briefly, *Mother Jones*) and tossed about ideas on how he could constructively spend his concessions money from Warner Bros.—a \$3 million problem I was more than happy to help him with. He suggested I offer benefit showings of his popular flick to the struggling rank and filers I was interviewing. I added that it would be nice to do a sequel featuring some militant footage from these under-publicized frontier fights. Mike said, 'Stay in touch,' which I interpreted to mean, 'Pass out my phone number to every union guy I'd meet with an idea for a better corporate mousetrap.'"

Frank discussion: While relating this to Joyce, it occurred to me that I got to know more about Moore during one conversation chopped up by invading phone calls from old Flint bud-

dies looking for a break and *New York Times* critics looking for one-liners than I'd ever achieve with the Sween through the daily osmosis of rearranging words to put in his mouth.

The UAW didn't like Moore's movie because its president, Owen Beiber, got caught on camera for 20 seconds looking ineffectual and less than awfully concerned. Brother Joyce summed it up succinctly for me. "Dealing with Michael Moore is like getting in a pissing contest with a skunk!" He continued, "He showed his movie at a New Directions conference [a UAW dissident movement] and accused us of trying to suppress his movie!" And in his very next breath Frank cautioned, "You better check with your leadership about the advisability of running your piece."

Despite *Roger and Me* being the most popular labor documentary ever, the piece I penned on the film was killed upstairs—inscribed with the red-penciled admonition "political minefield."

My only feature canned amid rancor from the top-floor censors and my Sween op-ed going nowhere after a second draft, I became increasingly pensive about how far out of my element I was dangling. I was seeing only P.R. assignments grace my desk, and, as I'd cross paths with sympathizing pals in the building, I'd be honored by a whistled bar of "Taps" or a graphically strung-up necktie. My radical breakfast group in Pittsburgh began a pool betting on how long I'd last.

In the final month of probation,

just as I was beginning to convince myself that I was closer to "getting it" in turning out some passable newsblurbs, a hot potato fell squarely into my lap. While interviewing a rank-and-file Hispanic member from one of the oldest locals in the union, my journalistic integrity was put squarely on the line. He challenged me to investigate a longstanding practice of collusion between building service companies and our international union in firing older Hispanic janitors so that the company could pay less to the fresh hires and the union could collect the bonus initiation dues. "That's the world out there for undocumented workers!" sighed the member. "We had to threaten to sue our own union before they'd back off [the practice]."

I got that sinking sensation again as I hung up the phone. I decided to spread the joy of my discovery to my fellow writers. Eyeballs rolled back and hysterical mirth filled neighboring cubicles. I sat uncomfortably on it for about a week until I found myself loosening up at a cocktail party sponsored by SEIU for a liberal Pennsylvania politician I knew. Sween was there, and I finally got to shake his hand. His recognition factor for me registered somewhere between zero and .5, so I refrained from asking him what he thought of my *third* op-ed draft or if he had yet taken in *Roger and Me*.

Dead lawyers: Instead, clutching a rum and Coke refill, I slithered away to a more shadowy alcove of the reception where lawyers were

hanging out. After breaking the ice with a nifty dead-lawyers joke, I offered a three-men-in-a-boat mortality scenario as an hors d'oeuvre to their meaty Marion Barry nose-dive speculations. Without naming names, I filled the boat with a Hispanic union member, an International Union officer and myself, a union journalist, and asked who should jump overboard with the above-mentioned "hot potato."

Suddenly I was reminded by "our" lawyer that one of the attorneys present was with none other than the Justice Department and that our internal union affairs might best first be discussed in private. I agreed and let the conversation move on to the less thorny abortion issue. The next day, "our lawyer" called me for lunch. I courageously explained away what I had heard from the janitor as vague rumor and declined—for the first time, mind you—a free trip to the trough.

If things could go further downhill from there, they did when I decided to publish pieces rejected by SEIU in outside and to-the-left publications. "Roger and Who?" appeared in *Z Magazine* and *In Pittsburgh*. And a commentary about racism ran in *Commonweal Magazine* and *In These Times*. My friends in the halls would sarcastically quip, "So when are you going to start writing for us?" Lifting my dead-meat spirits to the height of comes-around, goes-around irony, UAW's Solidarity House picked me to be a judge of their 1990 Journalistic Excellence contest! I was offered

Continued on following page



Continued from preceding page

the chance to back out shortly after it was learned that I was no longer with SEIU, but I reconfirmed and not only enjoyed the experience but also Frank Joyce's company!

My actual departure from the handsome Service Employees headquarters was far less brutal than I reckoned might have been the case with, say, the Laborers' Union. Thanks to the impeccable decency of Dave Sheridan, who compared me with Jack London, saying I was the classic case of "the right man for the wrong job," tracing my inability to write short and concise copy to having "too broad a vision," and finally giv-

ing me the lead into my current hands-on, in-the-field-with-the-ranks organizing work down here in LoUisiAna, I did a "last lunch" and exited feeling no animosity toward any individuals. Oh, sure, I've got loads of constructive criticism for our labor movement, which I'll elaborate on in Part II of this Organizer's Odyssey.

As a parting toast to this fall's penant race, and to further document my chronically confrontational lifestyle, let me conclude with a recollection of my very first out-of-my-league encounter with the big boys of summers past.

The big slide: One day late in the

'58 season, my big brother's Pony League team came up short a player. Smitty, his salty-dog manager, pressed me into right-field duty even though I was three years underage and pathetically small for my age. To pump me up for this crack at the "bigs," the wiry mentor wrapped his tattooed arm around me, spit some tobacco juice at my feet and told me the story of one Pepper Martin, the "runt" of the legendary St. Louis Cardinal's Gashouse Gang. Why, Pepper would routinely stretch a mere mortal's base hit into a crowd-pleasin' double or triple.

Smitty's eyes grew wide and wild as he related Martin's most famous

run in the 1930-something World Series against the mighty Tigers of Detroit. Roundin' third with his usual reckless abandon, Pepper suddenly came face to face with Hall-of-Fame catcher Mickey Cochrane, who, on one knee, had just snagged a low peg from the outfield. The fans gasped as li'l Pepper leaped completely over the lounging catcher, his feet landing squarely on home plate for the winning run!

To inspire me further, Smitty had me bat lead off. The wisdom of the old skipper proved sound for the lanky lefty hurler walked me on four pitches. My confidence brimming over, I took a lead of Ty Cobb proportions and found myself instantly picked off. Each of their infielders took a turn playfully prodding me to scamper for my life back and forth between the bases until I would inevitably collapse into exhausted submission. All on my brother's bench except Smitty turned their backs to the degrading spectacle. As the lumbering first baseman closed in to administer the final mercy tag, I suddenly hit the dirt, becoming a veritable boulder in the basepath, dispatching the big guy head over heels.

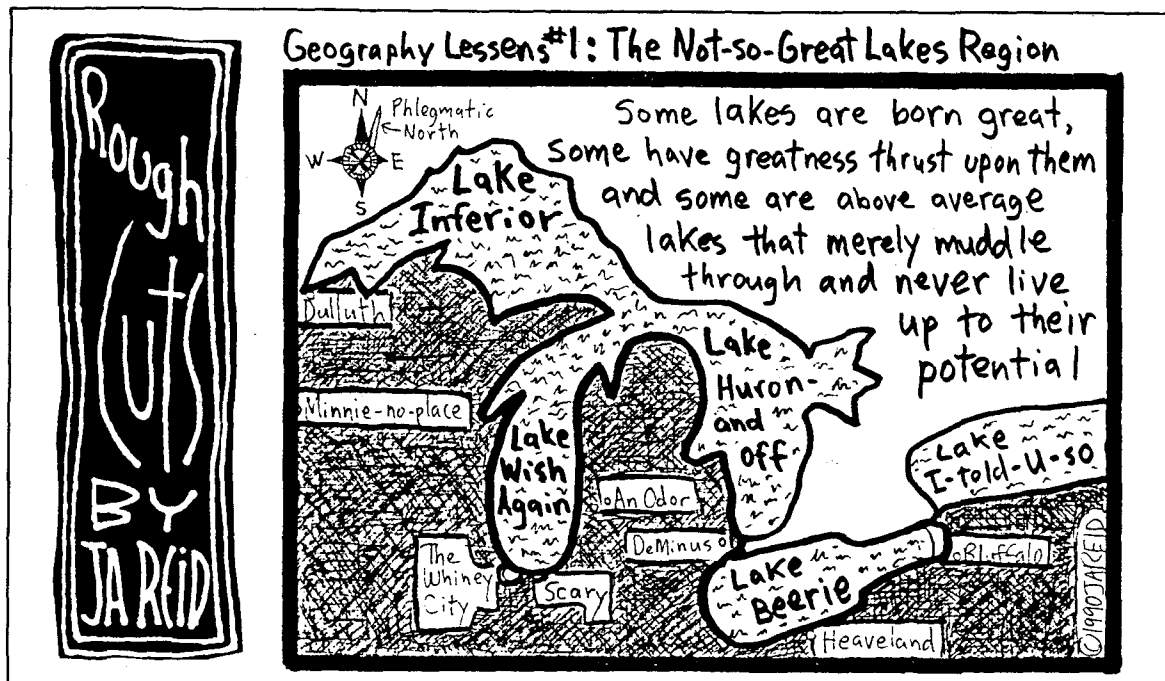
When the dust settled, the ball had squirted into right field and I was rounding the bases like a demon possessed, ignoring our third-base coach's stammering plea for moderation. When I arrived for my glorious date with home plate, there was

the smirking catcher with ball in hand, his big, evil frame blocking the baseline. Retreating into another humiliating run-down never entered my mind. Something else did.

As the catcher knelt to tag me as I would slide by in silly defeat, I disappeared into thin air. Raising his gaze skyward, the bewildered backstop saw the summer sun eclipsed by the kamikaze descent of my inspired form. Searching his forlorn countenance for some glint of appreciation for what Pepper Martin had made possible proved useless. I detected only horror as my spikes sunk snugly into the heart of his bright orange chest protector. For an unholy moment of reckoning, I stood suspended like a dart in the catcher's staggering carcass, until, straightening, he plunged me into a pitiful heap at his feet. In wounded rage, he chased me clear up the left-field line and into the parking lot before succumbing to the clacking of a loose shin guard and Smitty's running analysis as to the feasibility of the "slide."

Seems I've always been in left field when it came down to being fully understood in this game of life. But, like Yogi, I know in my heart that when the playing field is even, "it ain't over 'til it's over!"

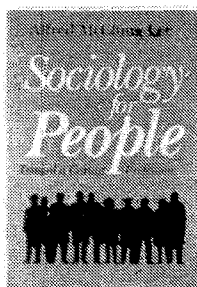
Larry Evans is "doing lunch" less and enjoying it more as an organizer/writer for the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers and the National Toxics Campaign.



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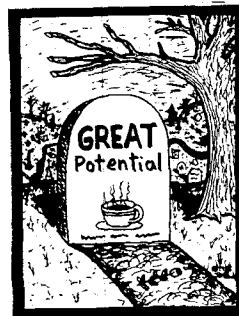
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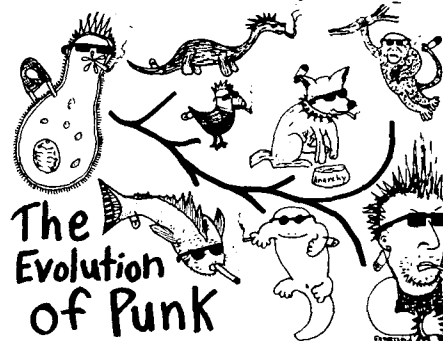
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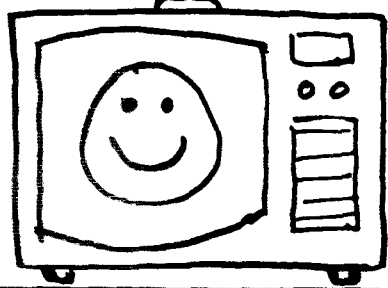


Evolution of Punk

Nuclear War



Nuclear war



An 'on-the-air' war over El Salvador

By Will Nixon

AS TV COMMERCIALS GO, IT'S not Bruce Willis destroying enough of an airport to lure you into *Die Hard II*. But it's not ring-around-the-collar, either.

"Your tax dollars are putting America in the red," says the voice-over, "the red of El Salvador." On the screen an anonymous hand begins writing out a check to the Internal Revenue Service for \$4 million. A gun shot. A murky black-and-white photo of a priest. The handwriting continues as a spot of blood begins seeping across the check. At the end comes a picture of Jesuit priests lying dead on the lawn, followed by a phone number to call to urge your senator to vote against military aid to El Salvador.

November 16 will mark the first anniversary of the killing of six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper and her daughter in one of the most outrageous acts in a decade-long civil war that has claimed 40,000 civilian lives. And the El Salvador Public Information Campaign, a new media program sponsored by the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES), the Jesuit International and Refugee Ministries, Neighbor to Neighbor and other related groups, has made a potent 30-second commercial to stir up some public anger.

The only problem is getting the ad on the air.

The Dodd-Leahy bill, which proposes to withhold half of the \$85 million in military aid for El Salvador requested by the Bush administration, is currently in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. A similar measure passed the House in June, but the El Salvador Public Information Campaign considers the Senate vote very close, with 49 senators apparently favoring it and 46 opposed. They'd like to run the ad in states with undecided senators such as William Cohen (R-ME), John Chafee (R-RI) and David Durenberger (R-MN).

"It's not *The Shining*, is it, which is how it's getting billed," says spokeswoman Ellen Braune after I'd seen the spot. "It's getting rejected at a rate of three to one. It's been rejected by every station in Los

Angeles, New York City and Washington, D.C., and by every state in which it is playing."

But stations in eight states have accepted the ad. It's running mostly in smaller cities like Sacramento,

TELEVISION

Bangor, Pittsburg, Portland (Oregon and Maine) and Minneapolis/St. Paul. "Actually, we expected fewer stations to carry it," Braune says. "Before the Jesuits' murder I think we would have had a much harder time."

But Denise Berger of Neighbor to Neighbor sounded much less sanguine about the rejections. Early this

Ads protesting U.S. military aid to El Salvador encounter strong resistance.

year, her organization had released an ad urging a boycott of Folgers coffee, which contains beans from El Salvador. The ad went almost nowhere, being accepted by only two stations, one of whom—WHDH in Boston—promptly lost \$1 million in advertising from Procter & Gamble, which makes Folgers. "I may not like it, but I can understand their reluctance with Folgers," Berger says. "But here we're not talking about any economic threat. What this campaign has done is make really, really clear just how almost impossible it is for ordinary people to get public-advocacy ads on the air. It's just outrageous."

Stations have given a variety of reasons for refusing the ad: it shows dead bodies, it's controversial, it's an inappropriate forum for a major issue. Perhaps the oddest reply came from Carol Powell of WJLA in Washington, D.C., who wrote in a letter that the station doesn't carry "emotional commercials," adding that "we do not air material which is intended to inflame or incite unreasoned public response rather than reasoned debate."

Double standard: "The Willie Horton ad comes to mind as one that fails every category they see this one failing," replies Braune. "We believe it's really a political decision

by the stations, not one of taste or advocacy." Aside from the ads pumped out by the Democrats and Republicans, she points out that public-service ads, such as those against drunk driving, are just as loaded and graphic as this one. "And when they say that it's a subject better suited to news coverage than to a 30-second commercial, we're caught between a rock and a hard place, because the whole reason we made the ad is that a wide range of views doesn't appear in the traditional media."

"Political commercials are on all the time," says Dennis Perrin of the media-watch group Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR). "What is unusual here is that it comes from a group, CISPES, that has been marginalized, at best, in the American media." Perrin points out that all of the feel-good spots put out by General Electric, Dow and DuPont serve political ends. "They have a keen interest in the U.S. economy and military spending. Fair enough. The problem is that a lot of people at the stations are so indoctrinated that the corporate commercials aren't even seen as political, whereas CISPES is seen as propaganda. Our position at FAIR is that these objections are themselves politicized. We believe they should open up to let as many voices be heard as possible."

Stations do have the right to run the commercials they wish. But their rejection of the ad has run as a small local news story in the *Washington Post*, the *San Francisco Chronicle* and several papers in Maine and elsewhere. But John Degan at KSTP, a Twin Cities station that took the ad, said, "It doesn't say anything illegal. Obviously, it's an emotional approach, but it's an emotional issue."

Only 20 to 30 people have called the numbers shown at the end of the ad, Braune admits. "But the local people have been getting swamped with calls," she says. The national campaign has invested \$30,000 in producing the spot and buying airtime, while local groups are placing the ads and kicking in money of their own. The voice-over was done by David Clennon who plays the boss with shark-tank ethics on *thirtysomething*. In real life he was an anti-war activist in the '60s and has made several trips to El Salvador.

In late September, a delegation actually took the ad down to El Salvador, Braune says, where they got full coverage in the papers and on TV. "It ran as part of a news story which showed the ad, the U.S. Senate debate and the U.S. protests. It ran on the morning, noon and evening news for two days." The sad irony is that the people of El Salvador have had a much better chance of seeing this hard-hitting commercial than most of us in the United States. ■

Will Nixon is a writer living in New York.

By Pat Aufderheide

That's Entertainment!

El Entertainment Television, the remodeled Movietime cable network, has plenty of entertainment "news," but, as its senior VP of programming Fran Shea made clear in the trade magazine *Channels*, nobody's taking it too seriously. "We're positioning ourselves to be very friendly with celebrities," she said. "We want to give support to the star on the news if, say, we find he's been caught with heroin in his car. I know it's bending journalism, but all entertainment news is bending journalism."

That's advertising!

Wilford Brimley may be everybody's grandpa, but now he's also in the avant-garde of advertising hustles. He stars in a commercial for Quaker Oats, and TV stations—desperate for ad dollars—are eager for the ad. But the Quaker Oats company will let them have it only if they also run an equal number of its own public-service announcements in choice evening time, for free. You remember PSAs—they were once those little blurbs for donating blood or giving to the United Way or getting prenatal care; you usually saw them if you stayed up late or got up very early, when ad time was hard to sell. They were part of a station's public-service obligation, now all but a dead letter. Quaker Oats' public-service announcements also just happen to star Wilford Brimley, and they urge you to eat more fiber. Some stations have expressed outrage, though 67 stations have taken the ad on its own terms. And it might actually raise an eyebrow at the Federal Communications Commission, though in the present deregulatory environment maybe not more than that. Meanwhile, falling viewership and pinched station budgets drive TV programmers into the arms of advertisers who've figured out a whole new twist on doing well while doing good.

That's education?

The CBS series *America's Toughest Assignment: Solving the Education Crisis* was the network's great claim this fall to serious, hardhitting journalism (and was also the brainchild of the recently fired head of network news, David Burke). But the truth about CBS' commitment to education may be more clearly demonstrated in its simultaneous \$6 million promotional campaign for its soap operas. CBS mobile soundstages will visit more than 50 colleges this fall, trying to convince students to watch CBS soap operas. College kids are already a big audience for them. The campaign will try to take the guilt out of staying out of class in the daytime to catch the latest episode.

Automatic zap

A new Japanese VCR automatically zaps commercials, and Japanese sales are going through the roof. (A U.S. model would have to adjust to different broadcast standards.) Understandably, the Mitsubishi company isn't advertising the new VCR on television.

TV and Cuba

TV Marti, the U.S. experimental propaganda service to Cuba, will continue, President Bush has ordered. The service has reached only a few Cubans, and then in the pre-dawn hours. The chancy balloon technology has sporadically failed, and the Cubans have successfully jammed it. The jamming has also befouled the domestic airwaves, so U.S. broadcasters vociferously oppose it. But Bush still claims that it's "feasible," part of our "national obligation" to provide "free access to information," won't interfere with domestic TV, and so is worth spending \$16 million.

Hog bellies, radio and TV

Another bad idea from the Reagan era has won a judicial stamp of approval from a court heavy with Reagan appointees. Until 1982, broadcasters had to hold on to their purchases for three years before selling them; that kept stations from becoming mere chips in the market, or what Rep. Al Swift (D-WA), a broadcaster himself, called the electronic equivalent of "hog-belly futures." But then the Federal Communications Commission revoked the rule, and within three years half the stations had been sold, a quarter of them more than once. Prices skyrocketed, so did debt, and broadcasters slashed the "expendables"—local news, affirmative-action programs, public service—to pay the price of operation. Recently, prices topped out, trading slowed, and owners saddled with overpriced stations are struggling under massive debt loads. Now the Washington, D.C., court of appeals has upheld the FCC's decision, prompting public-interest groups to ask Congress to bring the rule back. ■

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Philadelphia

Continued from page 13

In the primary, any Democratic outsider running against Blackwell would feast on those negatives. And in the general election, if Blackwell should get that far, the possibilities for a slick TV campaign are endless. Although he leads in all polls, Blackwell's negatives are almost as high as Goode's, but that is a phenomenon peculiar to Philadelphia politics. Lincoln Steffens, in *Shame of the Cities*, wrote that Philadelphia was "corrupt and contented." It takes a lot to move the Philadelphia voter.

But there is evidence that 1991 could be different. In the May 1990 primaries, the Democratic Party's candidates in two state Senate contests in the city finished third—the first time that has happened in anyone's memory. Philadelphia, like most of the nation, may be ripe for political upheaval.

History repeats itself: It happens every 20 years here—Philadelphia voters renounce old loyalties. In 1949, after decades of uninterrupted Republican hegemony over City Hall, Democratic reformer Joseph Clark was elected city controller. He spent two years exposing GOP greed and corruption and was elected mayor in 1951.

Then, in 1967, after 20 years of Democratic excesses in City Hall, Republican Arlen Specter—now a U.S. senator—came within 11,000 votes of beating Democratic Mayor James H.J. Tate. Tate's narrow re-election forced the Democrats to look at the city's demographics, at the narrowing of their white, ethnic base. They looked at 1971 and did not want a repeat of 1951. So they recruited Rizzo, a tough cop and former Republican, to be their mayoral nominee. Rizzo won, and the Democrats survived.

In 1987, ironically, it was Rizzo, running as a Republican, who nearly beat Goode and toppled the Democrats. Now, in 1991, the Republicans believe they have their best chance in 40 years to regain control of the mayor's chair.

Trapped, the Democratic Party, particularly the white powerbrokers in exile during the Goode years, believe the only way out may be a total dismantling of city government. That may be the only way not only to save Philadelphia but, perhaps more important, to save the party.

But time is not on its side. Each day Philadelphia edges closer to the brink.

The Los Angeles-based company rebuilding the police department's communication

systems walked off the job two weeks ago after the city would not pay its bills, leaving the police with a jerry-rigged radio room in the second-floor hallway of the police administration building. A new justice center and jail complex, with \$30 million already invested, sits incomplete, a huge hole in the ground in Center City, while the courts have tried to ease a critical shortage of jail cells by granting early releases to prisoners. "Crime has been legalized in Philadelphia," says Craig Snyder, a Center City lawyer.

There are other stories of a city on the brink. In Room 617 of City Hall, the copying machine used non-stop by police, defense lawyers and assistant district attorneys has a sign posted alongside that reads: "Bring your own paper." The city administration has asked local and federal judges to help out in the cash crunch by allowing 60-day delays in civil lawsuits against the city. Non-profit groups that provide health care and counseling have furloughed employees and moth-balled programs. A local firm has stopped supplying the city with asphalt for street repairs. The companies hired to publish ballots for the November 6 election have refused to print without the money up front.

The legislature in Harrisburg returns to work on November 12. That means it will have two weeks—until the November 30 adjournment of the legislature by law and the city's current deadline for running out of cash—to come up with a bailout.

What kind of bailout? The state cannot simply fork over the cash. It faces a \$1.2 billion deficit of its own. The Republicans, who control the state Senate, are not likely to bail out the Democrats in Philadelphia, figuring the longer the chaos reigns the better chance they have of taking City Hall in 1991. The Democrats in the Pennsylvania House have no reason to prop up Goode. But, if they come up with a plan to save Philadelphia, then maybe they can ride out another crisis in the 20-year cycle of political upheaval.

Candid camera: A week after the city's short-term note sale fell through, the Democrats all gathered in House Speaker O'Donnell's law office, way atop a new Center City office building across the street from City Hall. The Democratic leadership of the legislature and city council were there to begin negotiations on what the city wants and would be willing to give up to get it. It's all preliminary, because nothing will happen until after Casey's re-election on November 6. It was a formality, getting together for a

photo opportunity to send a message that the barriers are coming down, that everybody can get together, that political relationships are being mended.

And there was another piece of diplomacy. When the door to the small, windowless conference room opened to let the TV cameras in, Wilson Goode sat at the head of the table. He had come across the street from City Hall

to the law office of the city's leading legislator—a journey symbolic of the city's predicament. Philadelphia's fate is now in someone else's hands.

"The mayor was invited," said one of the participants of the meeting, "as a courtesy."

S.A. Paolantonio writes about politics for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

C A L E N D A R

Use the Calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$25.00 for one insertion, \$35.00 for two insertions and \$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of **ITT Calendar**.

CHICAGO

October 19-21

MIDWEST RADICAL SCHOLARS & ACTIVISTS CONFERENCE presents "The Global Crisis" of socialism and capitalism at Loyola University main campus, Rogers Park (along the lakefront, just south of Evanston). Over 1,000 are expected to attend and over 125 panels and presentations are being scheduled. All trends on the left are invited to attend to discuss and debate the crucial issues of our time. As we fast approach the year 2000, socialism faces crisis, confusion and national upheaval. The conference promises to be a major opportunity to explore connections between theory and practice and renew the socialist and radical movements in our country. For more information and registration, contact Carl Davidson, Networking for Democracy, 3411 W. Diversey, Suite 5, Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 384-8827.

October 26 & 27

125th BIRTHDAY SALUTE TO THE NATION magazine at the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center, 78 E. Washington, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Keynote presentation by Jonathan Kozol, author of *Illiterate America, Rachel & Her Children and Death at an Early Age*. Program includes: Gwendolyn Brooks; Studs Terkel; *Nation* editor Victor Navasky; Poet & Writers Union member Luis Rodriguez; former managing director of Pantheon Books Andre Schiffrin; and *Chicago Reporter* editor Laura Washington. Donations for this event begin at \$8 and up—sliding scale. Co-sponsored by PEN Midwest, Guild Books, Guild Complex, 3rd Unitarian Church, and Department of Cultural Affairs/City of Chicago. Also on October 27—Booksigning for the Anthology of *NATION* writings and Round Table discussion on "Tasks and Issues Confronting the Media" at the edge of the lookingglass, 62 E. 13th St. at Michigan Blvd. For more information on both events, contact Lou Rosenbaum, (312) 525-3667.

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FOURTH ANNUAL PERMACULTURE DESIGN COURSE—Permaculture (Permanent Agriculture) applies principles found in nature to design environmentally responsible communities. Course is designed for arid and semi-arid montane environments. Topics include trees and environmental reforestation, desert homesteading, water harvesting strategies and market gardening. Contact: Jerome's Organics, P.O. Box 631, Basalt, CO 81621, (303) 927-4158.

SAN FRANCISCO

November 9

A WORLD TRANSFORMED: SOCIALISM AND THE TRIUMPH OF DEMOCRACY, a meeting of the Democratic Socialists of America at 7:30 p.m. at the Cathedral Hill Hotel, Van Ness and Geary. Speakers include El Salvador opposition leader Guillermo Ungo, Longshoremen's Union President Jimmy Herman, and DSA Vice Chairs Frances Fox Piven and Bogdan Denitch. Admission \$5. For more information, call (212) 962-0390.

MINNEAPOLIS

November 9-12

CREATING CHANGE, the third annual conference of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, will be held at the Holiday Inn Metrodome. Highlights are the Fundraising Institute and the People of Color Institute. Registration is \$120 by Sept. 14, \$150 after. For registration forms and more information on NGLTF Cooperating Organization rates, limited income rates and the conference in general, contact NGLTF, 1517 U St. NW, Washington, DC 20009, Attn: Creating Change. (202) 332-6483.

WASHINGTON, DC

November 16

PROSPECTS FOR DEMOCRACY IN ZAIRE: AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE and a dialogue among leaders of Zaire's democracy movement and their international supporters. The conference will be held at the Brookings Institution from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and is sponsored by the Center for Research on Zaire, the International Center for Development Policy, and the Rainbow Lobby. Registration: \$15, \$10 for students. For more information, contact Rainbow Lobby, 1660 L St., #204, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 457-0700.

PHILADELPHIA

November 30-December 2

A NEW STAGE IN THE BATTLE FOR UNION DEMOCRACY, a conference held by the Association for Union Democracy at the Wyndham Franklin Plaza Hotel. The conference is scheduled for Friday evening, and all day Saturday and Sunday. Featured speakers include Glenn Berrien, president, Mail Handlers Union; Jerry Tucker, director, New Directions Movement; Jane Slaughter, editor, *Labor Notes*; Lewie Anderson, president, REAP; Ray Rogers, Corporate Campaign; Ron Carey, candidate for Teamsters president; Ken Paff, national organizer, Teamsters for a Democratic Union; Kim Fellner, executive director, National Writers Union; Victor Reuther, founder, UAW; and Joseph "Chip" Yablonski, attorney. For more information, contact AUD, YMCA Building, 30 Third Ave., Brooklyn, NY 11217, (718) 855-6650.

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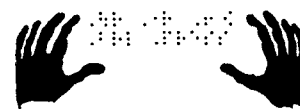
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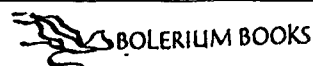
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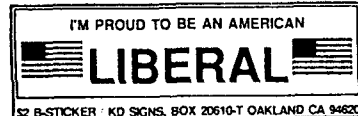
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Less Lessons



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By Woody Igou

In Jerzy Kosinski's novel and movie *Being There*, we encounter Chauncy Gardener, an urban noble savage, innocent and insular, who is perversely thrust into the glaring lights of celebrity. Judge David Souter is the Chauncy Gardener of Supreme Court justices. The grinning tabula rasa that now confronts us could also be deemed *The Judge Who Fell to Earth*.

In an earlier confirmation hearing we saw Judge Robert Bork as a larger-than-life samurai warrior, albeit one who committed hari-kari with the heavy sword of his all-too-forged philosophy. But with Judge David Souter, we are confronted with the converse—an inscrutable Buddhist monk; silent and weightless, he has left no more marks in the New Hampshire forest than Peter Pan. Reporters have done everything but carbon-date his toenail clippings, yet the window to his soul remains fogged and creepily bland.

Silent justice: But, alas, the secret of Souter's philosophy may have recently been revealed. The clue comes in the posthumous publication of the memoirs of Judge Harold Siffer, a jurist famous for his adherence to the obscure school of Judicial Minimalism. In his book *Silence in the Court*, Siffer fondly recalls a fruitful correspondence with young David Souter, while Souter was attending Oxford University. He noted, tellingly, that "David Souter, in temperament, habit and even dress, has the makings of a great Judicial Minimalist."

Judicial Minimalism began as a school of thought ("the red-headed stepchild of Legal Realism," as one wag put it) in the 1920s, primarily through the efforts of Judge Stanley "Stoneface" Jackson. In his influential essay "Language and Nausea," Jackson coined the term Judicial Minimalism and announced that judges should, above all, seek to "avoid the sticky snail's trail of dangerous and potentially conflicting verbiage in thought and deed." He warned that judges should refrain from ever taking a public or written stand, lest they become "trapped by language in a sack full of malnourished wolverines."

Most scholars dismissed Judge Jackson's thoughts and theorized that he had been unduly influenced by the laconic charisma of President Calvin Coolidge, who had appointed the judge to the bench. Another critic noted that "Judge Jackson has sharpened Occam's razor and held it up against his own throat." As if responding to this critique, Judge Jackson soon thereafter took his vows as a Trappist monk and from that day forward never uttered a word on the bench for his remaining 10 years as a judge.

By the '50s, Judicial Minimalism gained a trickle of followers worldwide. French Judge Marcel Dernada converted to Judicial Minimalism after reading Ludwig Wittgenstein's attacks on language. During a particularly stressful trial in 1958, Judge Dernada rose to his feet, blew a kazoo and, in a roaring voice, quoting Wittgenstein, stated, "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent." From that moment on he com-

pletely abandoned his formerly baroque style of communication on the bench in favor of mime. While Judge Dernada was scorned by the legal community, he became a minor hit with French theater critics (his "off with his head" routine was favorably compared with Jerry Lewis).

Less is the law: The school of Judicial Minimalism was given a great boost in the early '60s with the increasing acceptance of minimalism in the arts. Judicial Minimalists found sustenance in the empty gallery exhibits of Yves Klein, they fondly nuzzled the monochromatic canvases of

Ad Reinhardt and they loudly applauded Samuel Beckett's growing futility with language.

The recent memoirs, if true, link Judge Souter to the most famous Judicial Minimalist of the '60s. Judge Siffer, who sat on the appeals court of Massachusetts for many years, was a lifelong friend of minimalist composer John Cage and was deeply influenced by his thought. In 1966 Judge Siffer suddenly declared his intention to thereafter publish his opinions by banging his gavel on his bench in Morse code. To this end, he quickly hired a naval communications officer to serve as his law clerk. When threatened with disciplinary action, Judge Siffer softened his stance by allowing attorneys to view his mood ring during oral argument, as a "window to his soul."

His final act before being removed from the bench (which he later described as a tribute to John Cage's 4'33"), was the publication of his infamous opinion in *Burns vs. Trevor*, an opinion consisting of 50 blank pages.

Is Judge Souter a budding Judicial Minimalist? Have the political factions hoping for the appointment of a strict constructionist ended up with a boa constrictor who will seek to choke off the voice of the court? The signs will come slowly at first—at oral arguments, a nod instead of a verbal retort, briefs that are shorter and less sure. Then suddenly, all is quiet, as quiet as the New Hampshire woods on a snowy evening, so quiet you could hear a precedent drop. ■

Woody Igou is an attorney.

Judge Souter

and the tradition of

Judicial Minimalism